The Human Habitat

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Aesthetic and Axiological Perspectives

Pauline von Bonsdorff

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One cannot have truth without risks. There is no longer philosophy if one first looks to the conclusions; the philosopher does not look for shortcuts, he takes the whole route.

Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Éloge de la philosophie*
(Merleau-Ponty 1995/1960, 239)

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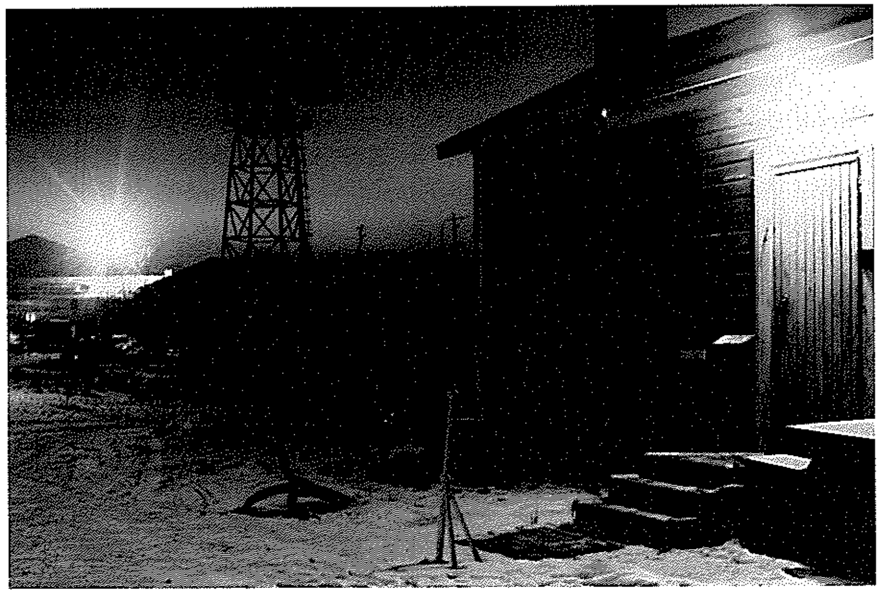
Different contexts let us confront unforeseen forms of life and marvel at their diversity.

I dedicate this work to the neighbours.

Berghäll (Kallio) in October 1998

Pauline von Bonsdorff



life, Suomenlinna/Sveaborg, Photo Pia Korhonen

Introduction

> *So rarified was the air of the philosopher's world out of the world, it was perhaps inevitable that he would end by turning on himself and his philosophizing as the only proper subject of thought. But the very thickness and confusion of reality provides new material for this other thought that, like leaven, has its source in material reality and its aim in the preservation and enhancement of human life.*[1]

It is often repeated that architecture is the most public among the arts, and yet in criticism the ramifications of this are easily forgotten. This was especially evident in the debate surrounding postmodernism which stemmed, on the one hand, from a reaction among architects against the rigidity of canonized modernism and, on the other hand, from the insight that social engineering, as applied to building, often had disastrous effects on community[2]. If the vulgarized forms of modernism contributed to alienation - which certainly has other grounds, too - could the answer be to revive the language of architecture? This seemed to be a shared belief among postmodernists and theorists that turned to semiotics for help. However, the rarified air within the utopia of modernism, with its bold assumptions about the basic needs of universal man, did not gain much in fragrance when architecture turned on itself as the only proper subject of thought. Building includes more than signs and images, and dwelling is both more and less than interpretation.

To indicate this more and less, let me briefly note some problems in two versions of the semiotic approach. Along one semiotic path, building is seen as a communicative system in its own right, where the basic significative units are also functional units[3]. The benefits of this approach, with respect to everyday, layperson experiences of architecture, is that one does not have to assume that our understanding of buildings presupposes sophisticated and explicit knowledge of the history and intentions behind the built forms. The meaning of the stairs is then, put bluntly, the possibility to go up or down, and we understand this meaning because we are embodied and cultural subjects. A shortcoming of this perspective is that in its emphasis on functionality it overlooks that our relation to buildings is more than functional, practical or interpretive. We sometimes sit and think, but sometimes we just sit. Our relation to a bench or to a house is a relation to a thing rather than to a significative unit. Our environment is full and dense and we are absent-minded in various ways in addition to being attentive or goal-directed.

Along another semiotic path language is not understood as a feature of building, but as the privileged mediating practice which maintains the meaning of architecture and makes architecture meaningful. The idea is that architecture always exists culturally in relation to spoken and written language and is designed and built according to patterns of thinking[4]. This idea is certainly acceptable and illuminating, especially with respect to the constructive and creative side of building, and it does not preclude interaction between buildings and ideology. But in its more specific forms, whether these consist of analyses of the meaning of the classic columns or of deconstructivist sophistications, this perspective is distanced from what is actualized on the street[5]. If architecture preaches or tells jokes for the literate it may still, on the whole, be experienced as mute.

What is the relation between everyday - tacit, uninformed, confident - environmental experience and the significance of the built environment? What are buildings and how do they become what they are, on the street? Such are, roughly, the questions which gave impetus to this study. When I started, I was resolved not to betray the ignorance which is an inevitable part of our experience, of anyone's experience, of the built environment, and if I have succeeded, criticism is to be expected. But I insist, and I want to add that there are ways if not of knowing, then of acknowledging ignorance and anonymity, becoming familiar, even confident with it.

The thickness and confusion of reality does more than provide material for another thought, it even calls for thought which is not directly aimed at explication. I have adopted aesthetics as my general frame, for it is my belief that the environment as a whole, its overall significance and potential value in human life, is better understood in a framework of aesthetics than in the more specialized discourses of semiotics, communication or design which certainly have virtues of their own. In chapter two below, I shall discuss and suggest the placement and role of the aesthetic aspect or point of view in environmental experience. Here, I would like to indicate the fruitfulness of aesthetics for understanding the environment and the potential of this tradition. The points I shall make are not and do not pretend to be comprehensive. They only declare the direction and position of my work in relation to an area of thinking.

Aesthetics, the philosophy of art and beauty, is a strand of Western thinking that at its best does little violence to the fullness of human existence, with all its other sides, as compared to what is of immediate instrumental value. There is a nonpracticability of the aesthetic, a resistance to subsumption under concepts or goals and a reflective openness. This was suggested already by Immanuel Kant, the founder of modern aesthetics, who not only took over some ideas from British empiricism but also developed and established them as integral parts of philosophy and of the understanding of human life[6]. It is true that Kant, emphasizing rationality, underplays the sensuous and concrete elements of experience; that he describes the aesthetic formally and abstractly, as relative to the cognitive faculties of reason and understanding; that he, on the whole, disconnects the subject from the world[7]. But he also points to a connection of cognition and morality in reflective judgement; a connection which is not given but must be established by the subject in an experience which is synthesizing, interactive, and by its singularity also situated[8]. These difficult and demanding elements of Kant's thinking - that there is a general axiological relevance of aesthetic judgement - not only make it more challenging, but also more suggestive than those models which take the autonomy of the aesthetic for granted and portray it as a separate sphere which we enter and exit, as if there were no connections and no influence between a supposed ordinary world and aesthetic experience.

Kant emphasizes the singularity of the object and the irreducibility of direct perception in aesthetic judgement. Still the perceiving subject is described as transcendental rather than as concrete, individual, embodied, historical. It is not Immanuel who contemplates the rose, but a universal representative of humankind. Although this is not an inadequate description, for there is a sense in which the subject in aesthetic reflection leaves the limitations of personal life behind, it brings along idealization and disregard for the concrete context in which the judgement has its bearings, where it is made and which it illuminates and departs from[9]. This is a problem for understanding aesthetic experience of environments, if also of art[10]. It conceals, even betrays the axiological dimension of the experience which includes that we measure and value not only an object but also ourselves in reflective judgement: that we take a turn in reflective engagement. Thus a formalist aesthetics is born, with a bracketed space of aesthetic experience devoid of practical, affective, historical content, above and outside the everyday.

The delimiting, separating tendency of much aesthetic thinking can be described as a failure to recognize the challenges of Kant's model and the reality of the elements that are present in aesthetic judgement[11]. If the early developments of aesthetic thinking brought forth the nonrational sides of human existence and a subject which "inherently resists reduction into general categories",[12] these other than narrowly rational sides also became isolated and understood as something apart from normal life. This is mistaken. An aesthetic point of view, or an aesthetic mode of experiencing and perceiving cannot be described as alien to practical activities or cognitive interests without the risk of becoming trivialized. The aesthetic mode may be characterized by a higher degree of sensitivity and reflection and a more conscious synthesizing than existence generally[13]. But everyday life is neither practical, nor cognitive, nor sensuous, nor specialized in any other way; it is mixed, as is the aesthetic. In the same way as the aesthetic, the monolithic ordinary is an illusion. To make this more clear, I shall in this study use the word 'ordinary' to refer to the illusory monolithic humdrum, and 'everyday' to refer to our actual, mixed and variable situation.

That the tradition of aesthetic thinking holds promises does not mean that it always fulfils them. In order to fulfil the promises and remain true to its basic insights the paths between thinking and experience must be kept open, while it is less important to find ultimate answers. Further, if we accept that there is an interaction between our patterns of thinking and our behaviour, that philosophy, in its implicit and internalized modes, is one of the grounds on which we live, as individuals and as members of a culture and society, it becomes important to develop notions with which we could do justice to or contribute to making the best of human life, without shunning its negative sides. This is the attraction and the motivation of "*meliorism*, which recognizes (...) grave flaws and abuses but also (...) merits and potential".[14] Thus I look at the tradition of aesthetic - and other - thinking sympathetically and in earnest, with a view to its promises and potential, while I am also critical of some of its assumptions. In addition, it is worth emphasizing that I look at the human habitat, at environmental experience and at buildings, from an internalized platform of aesthetics, which may explain why my main aim is not to circumscribe the area of aesthetics. One can move in the world with aesthetics as a searchlight, which is not to reduce all matters to aesthetics in a reductive movement of aestheticization[15]. In this study, descriptions of personal environmental experiences have been included when it seemed appropriate, but not only in order to illustrate some points. Experience has a greater weight than that, and an aesthetic mode of perception - attentive, alive and critical - is indispensable for the vitality of aesthetic thinking.[16]

If the foregoing is relevant for the tradition of aesthetic thought, or philosophy, I also endorse the view that there is in human life a synthetic, reflective and responsive mode of experience which deserves to be called aesthetic. But there are reasons to limit the discussion of aesthetics to the anthropocentric perspective. The complexity of aesthetic experience, including the interaction of sensuous, emotional and reflective elements, perceptions, experiences and, in particular, ideals, gives reason to doubt that a creature without language could have an experience of this kind, and, even if it could, there is no way of assessing this[16]. Our only way to discuss the aesthetic is in relation to a human being. To characterize the environment as beautiful is to express an experience relative to a human perspective. But it is important to note that what is thus valued is neither projected nor, mostly, produced by humans alone. As Holmes Rolston III points out, "[w]ilderness brings a moment of truth, when we realize how false it is that the only values, moral or artistic or political, are human values".[17] While environmental aesthetic value is by necessity anthropocentric, it is importantly other than anthropogenic.

How we understand aesthetic experience and human experience in general is neither without importance nor independent of our philosophical frames. This is the reason why I present a phenomenological view of experience in chapter one, basically drawing on Maurice Merleau-Ponty, before I discuss the place of aesthetics in the frame of environmental experience in chapter two. Merleau-Ponty understands the human subject not only as an embodied, but also as a historically situated being and if he is right, then any thinker, including himself, me, and the reader, is conditioned in this way. That existence is topological, with the subject as a fold or a cavity, immersed in the world rather than floating above it as a balloon, strengthens the demands on thinking in terms of truth and responsibility[18]. As my work is driven by certain questions rather than by exegetic ambitions I endorse and criticize phenomenology as a tradition rather than as a method and I draw on other relevant sources when appropriate. The fruitfulness of the phenomenological approach, in its late- and post-Husserlian versions, lies in its reluctance to reduce and abstract human experience - virtues it shares with aesthetics and with some other traditions.

In a way which parallels the centrality of experience or perception in its main philosophical sources, this study opens in two directions. One is the human being, the experiencer, which dominates the two opening chapters. The other is the environment, the field where perception is played out and where the perceiver finds herself, in a context where culture and nature constantly influence each other, as they do in her body. The experiencer and the environment are not separate but can be seen as two poles, or sides, of experience[19]. This means that while the world does not exist for us objectively, subjective experience is never idiosyncratic through and through, not even in its psychotic versions. Yet for any individual there is a surrounding, extending world which was already there and will continue to be there after he goes away. Neither subjectivity nor worldliness can therefore be reduced. But to point to two sides of experience, subject and world, does not imply an ontological dualism. The distinction is motivated by critical and epistemological interests of discernment and knowledge. To perceive something, one must perceive it *as* something and *from* a certain point.

In part two, I chart the elements of the habitat, the natural and built environment, the places where we live. If we accept that both subject and object are specific, individual and situated, it becomes obvious that cultural and historical features must be taken into account. How are cultural artefacts perceived in particular situations, what meanings are present in experience, is there stability in the cultural role(s) of the elements of the built environment and in their capacity to be valued[20]? To be more clear on the relations and the interaction between individual experience and situations, on the one hand, and the inherited, sedimented cultural and material environment, on the other, I begin this part with some observations on the terms 'meaning', 'meaningfulness', 'sense' and 'significance'. Then, in chapter three, I discuss environmental elements and structures with an emphasis on the givenness of a humanly made but also multiple and changing environment. This includes natural and cultural elements, intentional and unintentional: what is expressed and what simply appears. In the discussions of chapter four, however, a human experiencer is necessarily present: atmosphere, expression or representation exist only in relation to a subject, and the functionality of buildings is socially constituted. In chapter five I move closer to individual experience and try to illuminate the relation of a human being to the environment through perspectives related to appropriation, locality, environmental image and sense of place.

At this point, some words on my understanding of the environment and the human habitat are in place. I understand an environment as always relative to a species, a community or an individual, whether this is a human being, an animal or a plant. Without such a centre, we cannot speak of an environment. But the boundaries of an environment are soft and flexible: the hare's forest does not end definitely at the point in the forest where he usually turns, and he might continue, for instance if chased by a fox. Like the world, the environment contains everything, but it does so locally, in a spatially and temporally limited way[21]. An environment contains tangible, material objects, living organisms or coinhabitants, often invisible but felt elements such as temperature, humidity or pollution as well as behavioural patterns and processes. Further, although an environment can be understood only as relative to a subject, this does not mean that the subject consciously relates to all its elements.[22]

A built environment is physically altered by human beings, so that human-made structures are perceptible. These structures may not only be buildings, but also roads or walls. In some cases, it may be impossible to decide merely by looking if a land form is built or natural. Further, a built environment is not the opposite of a natural environment, and each built environment importantly includes natural elements and influences. The built environment consists of separate objects such as buildings or bridges, but also of built spaces, such as squares or yards. The line between architecture, which I understand in a large sense, including planning and design on different levels, and mere building is often hard to draw, and in the perspective of dwelling it may not be necessary[23].

A path in the forest is not built if it is the result merely of walking. But even if it does not belong to the built environment it belongs to the human habitat. By 'habitat' I understand an area which is actively inhabited by an individual or a group and also transformed by its inhabitants. The notion of a 'human habitat' integrates material reality and representations, what is there and how it appears, what we see and what we see in what we see. These two sides are emphases, perspectives, dimensions, even directions of experience, but compared to a concrete, experienced, inhabited environment they are abstractions. The habitat is a mix: its elements originate in the world which is already there but is also transformed and maintained through human activities.

Habitation, or dwelling, should be understood in a generous sense[24]. The habitat is not necessarily importantly transformed in its outward shape by humans. To call a habitat human is to point out that it belongs to human culture but not to oppose it to the natural world. A habitat integrates nature and culture, which are not separate in a concrete environment. Although for humans 'nature' may always appear mediated by culture - minimally by a way of life or a life form - no culture can exist without nature[25]. As con-structed, built with certain materials, the habitat is dependent on what is given in the environment. On the other hand, the habitat points to living and dwelling as key terms rather than construction. There is an emphasis on embeddedness, on being in a location and relating to it. The notion of habitat also gives room for other species. I may dwell among the pines, but the birds live in them and become part of my habitat, as I do of theirs.

To belong to the human habitat an area must be appropriated or felt as belonging to a human world. Human habitats are areas which individuals visit, pass through, spend parts of their life in and recognize as human. This involves adaptation and often, but not necessarily, cultivation and building. Even if the outward shape of an environment is unchanged by humans it may be recognized as a human habitat, as are the skerries where fishermen land when they go fishing in the autumn, or a far-away hunting area. But clearly, it is useful to keep in mind that today most human habitats are urban or semi-urban areas, and that kind of fairly dense built environment is most relevant for this work.

The term 'human habitat' also does not include evaluative claims. Many human habitats are rather inhuman and definitely do not belong to the positively valued environments[26]. Still they are recognized as formed by humans for humans to live in or for other human purposes. The human habitat includes shanty towns, privatopias[27] and motorways, but also such masterpieces as the Taj Mahal, the Hagia Sophia, or the Pantheon in Rome. Slums, bombed cities, exploited or eroded environments belong to the human habitat. The Aral Sea, once the world's fourth-largest sea, is now a dry, salty seabed with landed ships, and in this condition a result of human activities: a human creation. The built environment is today often a cruel messenger of civilization, for it does not convey our confessed values so much as the values we live by; it does not express culture, but reveals it, as a symptom.

If aesthetic response in itself includes an element of valuing, then the aesthetic perspective might always be axiological[29]. However, in that case a further distinction is needed, for the aesthetic perspective is not always axiological in the same way. Reflection on problems of aesthetics need not contain any explicit normative suggestions. By calling the third and final part of my study *Axiological perspectives* I want to underline that the focus, within the larger context of reflections on the human habitat, is on what kinds of potentially valuable, humanly relevant meaning the environment embodies and suggests or might embody and suggest. The reflections go beyond what is mostly reflected upon within aesthetics; however, as in this study on the whole, aesthetic and axiological perspectives are not alternative, but complementary. The two chapters are similarly structured, consisting each of three sections dealing with what may be described as the political, the social, and the natural dimension of building and dwelling. Chapter six highlights some trends of contemporary building and is more critical in tone, whereas chapter seven argues for the general relevance of certain qualities in built environments. In these analyses, as elsewhere in the study, the paradigmatic experiencer is concrete and bodily present to the environment - concreteness being the reason why I sometimes refer to a he, sometimes to a she.

I have been present to my environment and time, as one constituent part among countless others. Therefore this is a topical study because it is topological: written from this position, in this time. If human existence is always topological and responsive, whether we realize this or not, it leaves us no real choice to step aside and merely observe. From that conviction comes my utopian tone, which is mild but concerned. It is late on earth. Twilight remains. Thus we must look with the light we have, in the light we are, however flickering.

Notes

[1] Nye 1994, 235.

[2] See, for example, Blake 1977.

[3] See Eco 1972; also Broadbent, Bunt and Jencks 1981.

[4] Martinidis 1986; compare Watkin 1984/1977.

[5] See, for example, Jencks 1978.

[6] Kant's mature aesthetic thinking is developed in the first part of *Kritik der Urteilskraft*, Kant 1990/1790.

[7] Compare Berleant 1991, 12-13, and 1994a. However, as Berleant points out, Kant's idea of the sublime introduces an element of vivid feedback from the world to the experiencer; Berleant 1992, 167-171.

[8] Gibbons 1994, compare Guyer 1993.

[9] I leave open to which extent this is a problem of Kant or rather of his readers. Gibbons points out the importance of embodiment and feeling in Kant's theory; Gibbons 1994, 146, also 93, 169.

[10] Welsch 1996, 223-226 (in English 1997, 129-131); Berleant 1991, 53-174.

[11] 'Reality' means, here, that these materials originate in the tissue of everyday life. For such a notion of reality and its denial in thinking, see Sartwell 1996.

[12] Bowie 1990, 255.

[13] See, for example, Hepburn 1993, 66-68, or Welsch 1996, 106-134 (in English, 1997, 60-77); also chapter two below.

[14] Shusterman 1992, 177; compare 99.

[15] Various versions of twentieth century totalitarianism, Futurism, Fascism or Nazism are warning examples; see Hewitt 1993 or Eksteins 1990. For a discussion of contemporary aestheticization processes, see Welsch 1995/1990, 9-40, or 1996, 9-61 (in English 1997, 1-32).

[16] Compare Levinas 1992/1986, 140.

[17] One problem in Leena Vilkka's discussion of a naturogenic aesthetic is that she overlooks the difference between merely perceptual and aesthetic features; Vilkka 1995, 137-139.

[18] Rolston 1994, 15.

[19] This is the way existence is described by Merleau-Ponty in his later thinking, Merleau-Ponty 1991/1964, e.g., 192.

[20] Merleau-Ponty 1992/1945, 67.

[21] Holmes Rolston III suggests that to be of value or valuable is to be "able to generate momentous value"; Rolston 1994, 223.

[22] I discuss 'world' in chapter one, first section.

[23] Metaphorically, one can speak of, for example, an intellectual environment, but, in the basic sense I shall use, an environment is physical, cultural and mental, as is our body. Note also that the intellectual environment may not be purely intellectual, for thought is embodied and expressed in particular ways by particular individuals.

[24] I discuss this in chapter three, first section. In everyday usage the main difference is probably on the level of ambitions and conscious expression: architecture is, after all, a profession and not just an activity.

[25] See below, chapter three, fifth section.

[26] Compare Rolston 1994, 1-33.

[27] Burgess and Gold 1982, 4-6.

[28] See chapter six, second section.

[29] Berleant 1992, 22-23.

PART ONE
PERCEPTION AND AESTHETICS

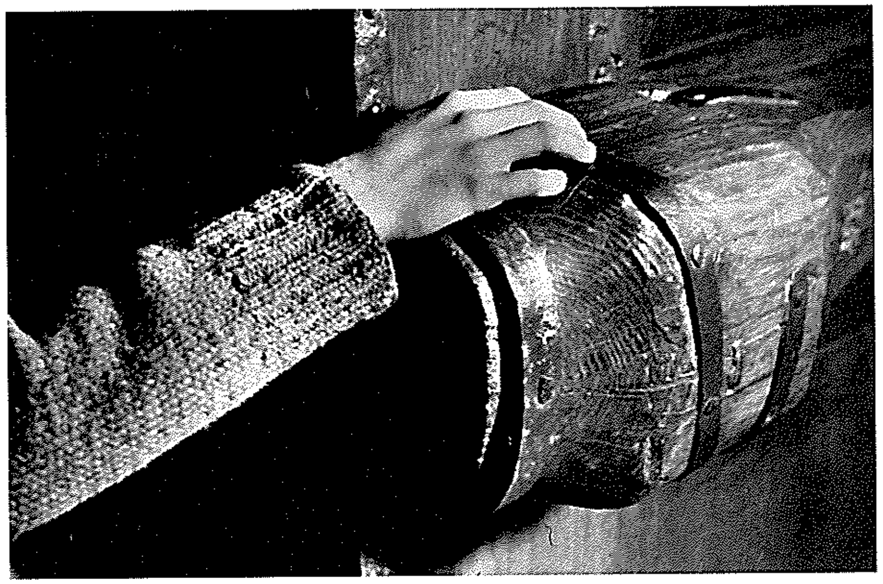
> *No philosophical movement has better than contemporary phenomenology brought out the transcendental function of the whole concrete density of our corporeal, technical, social and political existence, but it has also thereby brought out the interference of the transcendental relationship and the physical, technical, and cultural relations which constitute the world in the "fundamental historicity" - in this new form of the* ***mixed.***[1]

In this part of the study, the focus is on the human individual, the perceiver or subject, as I shall mostly call her. This subject is a concrete person whose concreteness can be referred to in terms of situatedness, contextuality, historicity, embeddedness. Thus an individual becomes herself only by becoming other than herself, turning towards the world and towards others.

The relevance of the environment for perception is general: all perceptual experience, indeed all human experience is environmental, in the sense of contextual and situated. There is therefore a distinction between environmental experience and experience of the environment: only in the latter do we direct our attention to the environment. The point of the term 'environmental experience' may be less evident, but it aims to indicate that there are also moments of inattention or absentmindedness when we do not turn towards the world, and when the qualities of the environment are still there as a background. Further, it is clear that attention and inattention to the environment alternate, as do the centres of attention, even when they belong to our physical surroundings.

At this point, a note on the term 'experience' should be added. The English word in fact includes two meanings: being experienced and having an experience[2]. They may be two sides of experience which are not separate, in which case there is a wisdom in presenting them in one word. When I use the term 'experience', I include in it the larger sense of gaining experience and being experienced. This must be pointed out, for it seems that in contemporary societies experience in the limited sense has become the dominant understanding, and this may impede our understanding human experience at large.

An aim of the two chapters that follow is to bridge the gap between everyday experience and aesthetic experience. The result is, I hope, that the aesthetic dimension can be understood as a potential of any situation, and that the connection and value of aesthetics to life in general is indicated. Thus chapter one deals with environmental experience generally, but includes some reflections on its aesthetic moments or aspects and in chapter two, where aesthetic experience is discussed, I critically reflect on suggested definitions with regard to the general understanding of environmental experience.



flesh Thorvald Lindquist's archive

Chapter one

ENVIRONMENTAL EXPERIENCE: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL VIEW

> *But I cannot escape being except into being, for example, I escape society into nature or the real world into an imaginary one, made from the debris of the real.*[3]

The relevance of Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology of perception for reflections on the experience of the environment is evident, for in his understanding, the perceiver is always and necessarily a situated subject: in the environment and of the world. This world is concrete, but it is also transcendent in relation to the subject. It is a world which exists, without doubt, but which also appears, and since appearance is perspectival, the world is and remains opaque and perceived, visible and invisible. Further, it is a world of things and history, real and imagined, of projection and memory.

To reflect on the world is necessarily also to reflect on the subject to whom the world appears. This makes perception central. In Merleau-Ponty's view, the human being is rational and thinking, a *cogito*, but also an animal, an *ego*, but with others. The emancipation from the lonely confinement of identity and rationality pushes the subject into a situation where both the ground of existence and his own boundaries are softened. But this does not imply a lack of relations and structures; on the contrary, it is only as part of the world, in touch and interaction with it, that the subject can exist at all. The strength of Merleau-Ponty's thinking is that it gives up neither the rational nor the sensuous side of existence. Indeed, to see the subject as given over to sensuous engagement represents a no less abstract, impersonal and universal view than that of the transcendental subject.

It has been argued that the relational, non-referential character of a post-Husserlian phenomenological discourse might lead to a focus on auto-referentiality, where significance (*sens*) prevails but specified meaning is lacking[4]. This is, in reverse, the problem of the transcendental subject of knowledge, who exists in an ordered universe but is out of touch with concrete reality[5]. But this becomes a risk only if we presume that Merleau-Ponty's reflections were meant to replace earlier theoretical frames and settle the questions once and for all. The world, in its opacity and extension, is then forgotten, and it is too complicated to be settled by any one project. Philosophy is unfinished. Remember also that if the subject is rooted in and reaching towards the world, influenced and influencing, this is true of the philosopher himself and herself - of all thinkers. Merleau-Ponty's thinking is not a scheme of the structure of human experience. Its force and ability to convince stem from its character of repeated and passionate turning towards the world, interrogating, reflecting, in basic openness to its different aspects and dimensions[6]. Merleau-Ponty's observations criticize, transform and complement, rather than reject, earlier views of himself and others[7].

The unavoidability of perspectives is true of philosophy - which might be seen as one kind of perception - not just of perception in the basic sense[8]. No philosophy or explanation can replace or fully render our grappling with the world, which necessarily takes place in a personal, historical, concrete situation. For this reason, several viewpoints are needed. In this chapter, I discuss perception on the basis of, but not restricted to, Merleau-Ponty's work. The first section outlines the basic situation of the perceiver in the world. In the rest of the chapter, I then address the subject's relation to the environment in dimensions which are relevant to both subject and world. To begin with, the perceiver is not just immersed in the environment, but turns towards it as an agent to a practicable field, where action and knowledge dominate[9]. This is the theme of the second section. But then one must note that the subject is also subjected to the environment: passive, exposed, being, not knowing or doing. The third section addresses the sensuous and anonymous, promising and secretive levels of body and space. Sensuousness opens environmental experience towards an acknowledgement of otherness, for the sensuous resists identity. The insight that there are others, different from me, who co-inhabit the world and resist cognitive grasp requires a response that rises from and parts with mere sensuous engagement. Such is the movement described in the fourth section, relying on and continuing Levinas' work. Finally, in the fifth section I take up the synthetic perspective again, more concretely and as a preparation and bridge to the rest of this work.

The perceiver in the world

The title of Merleau-Ponty's major study, *La phénomenologie de la perception*, is symptomatic not only of the focus of his own work, but also of a turn in philosophy from Hegel's phenomenology of the spirit, via Husserl's transcendental phenomenology with its scientific aims, to an emphasis on the concrete human being as the centre of philosophical interest. Here Martin Heidegger and Jean-Paul Sartre, but also the later Edmund Husserl are important.[10] That the subject is concrete and situated means that he is dependent on his environment or context: a human being, indeed any organism, cannot be understood separately from the world he inhabits. Interdependence characterizes the relation of subject and environment, including other people, a relation which is neither uncomplicated nor deterministic. The interdependence of perceiver and environment is but one manifestation of a pervading trait of Merleau-Ponty's thinking: the shunning of the either-or and the cultivation of opposites in order to show their interdependence in the communicative processes related to perception, thinking, and human interaction in general. The observation that his account of phenomenal meaning "reflects the fluidity of the phenomenal field" is accurate for his philosophy in general[11]. It is dialogical in character, from the first discussions of experimental psychology to the later reflections on reversibility, flesh or chiasm, all of which are articulations of the reciprocity which prevails in the relations between human being and world[12].

Merleau-Ponty develops his ideas against established theories of perception, particularly the rationalist tradition and empiricism. A basic claim already of his first book-length study, *La structure du comportement*, is that perception and meaning, body and mind, appearance and reality cannot be separated in human existence[13]. To turn perception either into mechanical sensation and subsequent interpretation, or into projection of form by the mind on the world, is distortive. In the process of perceiving, activity and passivity, projection and dependence, perceiver and world cannot be separated[14]. In this first overview of his understanding of perception, I shall likewise move between these poles.

Merleau-Ponty description of human existence implies that we are not only in the world, but also towards, for, at, and with the world (*au monde*). Reaching out for his pipe, the philosopher at his desk exists in a phenomenal field which conditions him, but also affords possibilities and a horizon of action. The philosopher would not sit comfortably on his chair and reach for his pipe if he did not trust and feel that the world exists, if he would not be bodily situated[15]. This basic trust or belief Merleau-Ponty calls 'perceptual faith'; its central tenet is that the world exists and that perception gives access to the world[16]. Our relation to the world has an immediate character: we assume space and things[17]. We take them to be there and take them on, we take responsibility for them. In this assumption we imply ourselves and the world we perceive. Trust is primary to doubt. "To doubt is always to doubt some thing, even if one doubts 'everything'. I am sure to doubt because I assume such or such a thing, or even all things and my own existence, precisely as doubtful."[18]

But what is the world? To Merleau-Ponty the world in the basic, fundamental sense, the natural world, the given, is extending and opaque, which means that it transcends any present knowledge and perceptions[19]. This is not because some areas or features are in principle hidden or mysterious, but because the world continues beyond the present situation in space and time. The world is meaningful - full of meaning, "pregnant with meaning" - because it is not given to us as a synthesis of understanding, as a totality which we can grasp. At the same time, the opacity of the world is the reason for its oneness[20]. The world is that which does not fall apart, however different our world views are; on the contrary, it demands multiple perspectives. "There is one world, one universe, because 'world' and 'universe' name the horizon of all horizons."[21]

If the world is one, it is also diversified, and its appearances are plural. These belong to the world, are given off by it, in the same way as different impressions are given off by a thing. In fact, it is the plurality of appearances that indicate that we have to do with a thing, not a concept. The world as a whole is characterized by *écart*: ramification, differentiation, movement. Ramification is importantly related to appearance, which is appearance to someone, and to the world being perceived. "The world is an open and indefinite unity where I am situated."[22] Because I am situated, the world exists for me, is inhabited by me as a 'lived world' (*monde vécu*). One may thus also speak of the world of an individual (*a* world), which is *the* world as it has opened itself to him, as he lives it. Such a world is not a given, static structure; it is, rather, a relation, a way and an outline for living towards the (transcendent) world[23]. On the other hand, the social world is, like the natural world, transcendent and continuous, for it is intersubjectively constituted. Culture and society are not inhabited by me alone, but co-inhabited by (irreducibly) other people, who have different perspectives.

In addition to individual worlds, one may also speak of the world according to systems of description. There is no antagonism between such descriptions, as there is no antagonism between the social and the natural world. The world of science, the 'objective world,' has an important place in Merleau-Ponty's thinking. As any other such world it cannot give us full reality but, as M.C. Dillon observes, it is "not unreal; it is abstract and ideal"; objectivity is "a goal that regulates our efforts, an ideality we project" and "a responsibility we assume"[24]. Through being projected, objectivity, in a seeming paradox, becomes subjective, but this subjectivity is necessary for the reality of the objective outlook. Only as projected from a certain standpoint, from embodied existence, can science have standing in the world.[25]

Inhabiting the world, we reach towards it, but we reach in different ways. To be towards the world is, for a human being, necessarily plural; transverse existence breeds versions, or faces, of the world[26]. Inhabiting the world with body and mind, we invest it with meaning, but what we thus give to the world we have first received from it[27]. Human existence is temporally and locally particular, tied to the givens of a situation, but also intentional and relating. Reflection, no more than perception, does not leave the situation behind, although it proceeds from it. On the other hand, says Merleau-Ponty, "'[n]atural judgement' is nothing but the phenomenon of passivity"[28].

To understand the fundamental reciprocity of the perceiver and the world, one must look at the full, embodied situatedness of the perceiver. To understand the active side of perception only through consciousness, as projection of identity, is not enough. Following Husserl, Merleau-Ponty points out that besides the thetic, conscious intentionality, the intentionality of acts which is directed towards objects, there is a more fundamental, operative intentionality at work in existence, which grounds rational synthesis[29]. If the thetic is directed towards identification, operative intentionality is more openly receptive. To grasp a thing is not to make a synthesis or a rational judgment, but to approach the thing with all one's senses. "In the cavity of the subject himself, we thus find the presence of the world, so that the subject should no longer be understood as synthetisizing activity, but as ek-stase"[30]. In this context, Merleau-Ponty also cites Husserl, who called this intentionality an "art hidden in the depths of the human soul"[31]. Operative intentionality is part of our way of existing, and perception is, as Dillon says, pre-personal[32].

The cognitive element is not added to perception, but is potentially present from the start[33]. For Merleau-Ponty, perception does not just find sense, it also creates it; through perception there is sense[34]. This does not mean that the subject would autonomously create sense; she bears it[35]. Sense is the bond between subject and world where, as Levinas says, "[t]he access is part of the meaning itself."[36] The different senses or dimensions of the term sense are all relevant here: sensual and sensuous, meaningful, and directional, but it is in the last and often overlooked sense that perception *is* sense[37]. Nothing is meaningful except for a subject, who "inhabits the world and, with his look, there traces the first direction-mark"[38]. If there are several meanings of sense, the same is true of direction. It is related to orientation, to having a place and finding one's way, and to the perspectival character of all perception[39]. Direction can be understood spatially, as in maps or as the directionality of the space around the body[40]. But direction also implies action, movement, change - from here to there - and is therefore a temporal as much as a spatial notion. Finally direction, or axis, suggests the axiological relevance of perception, which is constitutive of our orientation and standing in the world[41].

On all possible levels, perception is temporal. To be towards is to be on the way. To listen or to touch may or may not be an emotionally moving experience, but it is always an experience of movement, following or exploring an object or a situation. The same is true of looking or grasping intellectually: movement and perception are inseparable. Also here there is reversibility, so that each time we move we can perceive more, something else, although we need not attend to it.

But the world itself is also dynamic, not static, and although it may be true that its movement is relative to a perceiver who can himself move, the world and the things in the world change already by themselves. There is an intertwining of activity and passivity in what is perceived, which does not imply that we endow the perceived with subjectivity. Activity and passivity are apt as attributes of the things that appear to us and for us, but on their own terms. A tree or a rock might be compared to a 'quasi-subject,' or an aesthetic object, for it is not, in its concrete reality, subsumable under a concept, but always differs from what was expected[42]. Especially natural things, plants and animals are opaque in this way; on the other hand, only objects of rational knowledge are totally passive, but they are abstractions, not things. This is also an implication of the statement that "[t]here is absolute certainty of the world in general, but not of any particular thing."[43]

If one agrees with Merleau-Ponty, the idea of a philosophy of *mind* is fallacious, for perception can take place only in an embodied perceiver. This is no prerogative of the human perceiver; as Polanyi observed, "[T]he animal's intelligence is spontaneously alive to the problem of making sense to its surroundings."[44] A worm and a human subject are different, but

making sense is by both done in the whole body, not in a separate mind. In Merleau-Ponty, the human body is alive through and through, so that if one could characterize the body as mute, dark or opaque, one could not call it neutral, material (as opposed to spiritual), or an object. "But I am not before my body, I am in my body or, rather, I am my body."[45] In his later work, Merleau-Ponty moves towards understanding the subject with animality or life as key terms, not body or mind[46]. This view approaches Aristotle's notion of *anima*, the breath which resides in the living body, which is understandable only if body and soul, as opposites, are rejected[47]. The body is liberated from darkness. If the animal body is opaque, it is also the light and lightness of life.[48]

The sedimentation of sense, which comes about through living a life, acquiring habits, experiencing places, working, thinking, playing and feeling, would be nonsensical if we renounced the animal which we, fully, are[49]. This is also true for the related idea of the intentional arc, which "projects around us our past, our future, our human environment, our physical situation, our ideological situation, our moral situation, or which, rather, makes us situated in all these respects. It is this intentional arc which makes for the unity of the senses, of the senses and the intelligence, of sensibility and mobility."[50] The intentional arc also provides a useful perspective on identity as applied to persons; perhaps an alternative, at least a corrective to a more traditional understanding. It has been suggested that Merleau-Ponty's emphasis on the body, in its generality and anonymity, implies a disintegration or even a disappearance of the ego[51]. But one must remember that it is only the necessity of the option - either-or, active versus passive, mind versus body - that Merleau-Ponty rejects. When he states "in what is most properly mine, I am nothing", this is because the subject is in the world, and "it is the same thing to be nothing and to inhabit the world". Inhabiting, we are in our thoughts and in the things around us, so that "to be, for me, is not to remain in identity, but to carry before me the identifiable".[52] It must be remembered that the perceiver does not exist in a point in neutral space - a mere position - but in a situation which is invested with sense[53]. The ego disappears from sight only if one refuses to consider the concrete historicity of situations, with social and historical facts and personal desires, experiences and projects. Such concreteness is indeed as necessary for freedom as is the will, for one cannot make choices in an unconditioned situation.

As Iris Murdoch points out, the individual is inevitably a historical being, which means that learning to understand others is a gradual process[54]. In Merleau-Ponty's thinking, the social dimension is an integral part of the lived world, indeed, of the natural world - and of the subject. The social dimension is not a construct, but a given, although a dynamic given[55]. If it is part of the natural, the reverse is also true: the subject is constituted as much by what she is born with as by what she is born into[56]. Whether in the wilderness or in the city, the subject is the member of a species which forms a culture and a society. So in thinking: "I can construct a solipsist philosophy, but in doing it, I presuppose a community of speaking men to whom I adress myself."[57]

It has been suggested that Merleau-Ponty understands perception so broadly that it threatens to lose any precise meaning[58]. It is then overlooked that perception was never presented as the final word on human existence but as a beginning, assisting in the birth of an understanding that should be applied and enlarged, as Merleau-Ponty pointed out, to language, knowledge, society[59] and habitat. Perception is not a totalizing term, and since it refers to processes that take place concretely, it can be understood only through reflecting on such processes. But before getting there, I shall look more closely at some aspects of environmental, perceptual experience. Of these, the active and practical aspect is next.

Knowledge and action

> *The world of everyday life is the scene and also the object of our actions and interactions. We have to dominate it and we have to change it in order to realize the purposes which we pursue within it among our fellow-men. We work and operate not only within but upon the world. (...) Thus, it may be correctly said that a pragmatic motive governs our natural attitude toward the world of daily life. World, in this sense, is something that we have to modify by our actions or that modifies our actions.*[60]

According to Alfred Schutz, when we reflect on social reality action, not perception, becomes the dominant theme of philosophy[61]. In the "natural attitude of the wide-awake, grown-up man in daily life" the kernel of reality is the "world within reach"[62]. A primacy of manipulation could be seen as a necessary consequence of applying the idea of contextual, interrelating, thoroughly intentional existence on social reality; I shall later argue that it is not. But if Schutz might be criticized for his onesided emphasis on *Homo faber*, his readers should remember that he deals with reality in one of its aspects. The primacy of manipulation becomes a problem only if it is taken to comprise everything of significance in human existence, which is certainly a tendency of Western culture. However, given their proper place, manipulation and practicality are both inevitable and at least potentially enriching dimensions of life.

In this section, I shall focus on the active stance of the subject in relation to the world, on the animal which not only exists in a relation of sense, but actively makes sense of its surroundings. Such a stance is the prerequisite for action and knowledge, for getting along in the world. I shall briefly complement Merleau-Ponty's ideas with those of others who give more emphasis to the role of doing, related to tacit knowledge, in perception. I shall then look at some traditional ideas about sense perception which, while one-sided, contain certain insights. For perception has a side which is passive rather than active, impracticable rather than practicable. The negation and devaluation of this side are equally problematic, for both strategies represent a simplifying defence of the cognitive and practical value of sensuous experience, as if it were all there is to it. Before looking at its other sides, in later sections, I shall here reflect on less rigid ways of understanding how we get along in the world: acting, but also withdrawing.

That abstract knowledge is not the only kind of knowledge relevant in human life is a late discovery in the modern philosophical tradition. Gilbert Ryle's distinction of *knowing how* and *knowing that* and Ludwig Wittgenstein's understanding of the role of context and praxis importantly broadened the scope of epistemology by indicating that there are other forms of knowing than those represented by modern science and logic[63]. Certain developments in psychology and physiology point in the same direction. I shall later in this section discuss some aspects of Michael Polanyi's and J.J. Gibson's work, which directly deal with the sensuous and embodied side of perception.

In the phenomenological tradition, Martin Heidegger's magnum opus, *Sein und Zeit*, certainly contains the most important and influential analysis of everyday life. Some of his ideas are discussed by Merleau-Ponty, whose primary point of departure is, nevertheless, perception, dealt with in his early work through the critical interpretation of scientific research and models[64]. While Heidegger's thinking about Being is more on the level of culture, including acquired habits and language as well as such existential notions as anxiety and freedom, Merleau-Ponty tries to go beyond this to the prepersonal level of perception, thus including what is nature in the human being. This makes his work promising for reflections on environmental experience, which to an important degree is uncoded, unreflected, anonymous, and yet not meaningless. On the other hand, a habitat is undeniably a cultural space, a sphere of action, meaning and symbolization. There are several points at which I shall touch upon Heidegger, and this is the first.

Everyday life is, according to the early Heidegger, dominated by a relation to things which he calls readiness-to-hand. A hammer is understood unreflectedly as a piece of equipment which can be used for certain purposes and is thereby related to the public world, to society and other people[65]. The important point to note here is that everyday life, in Heidegger's view, is characterized by an attitude where things are both taken for granted and taken to serve purposes[66]. This is the world as the practicable world, as Alphonso Lingis puts it, "the open-ended network of instrumental connections"[67]. But as Lingis also points out, against Heidegger, tools are not only 'forms' that are appropriate for purposes. To grasp the hammer in order to nail something is not only to perform a function, act with a goal. "The hand that reaches out for things does not make the outside more and more determinate"; there are, rather, "multiple and discontinuous practicable and impracticable fields, extended not in the void but in the sensuous density."[68] Lingis performs a contextualization of the practicable, placing it not in the network of infinitely more and different activities, but in the density of sensuous and material substantiality, in the transcendent opacity of the world. This is a useful and necessary reminder, without which the understanding of the practicable itself might become circular[69]. To be able to recognize and identify things according to their purpose and functional context is vital for getting along in the world, but to believe that such functionality is the only relevant aspect of everyday existence only reinforces the tendency to underestimate the inherent creativity of everyday life.

A similar but more serious risk accompanies Heidegger's description of social existence, our being with and among others. The general social environment, which includes other people as well as oneself, is, according to Heidegger, understood relative to a neutral *one* (*das Man*). This is the human being in general or, perhaps better, the expected average member of one's own culture. *One* is a construction, not a real human being, but also, says Heidegger, a necessary ingredient of human existence.[70] Now the risk with this line of thinking is that actual other people, the real and concrete neighbours behind the wall and above the ceiling, may become marginalized, forgotten, even casualties of a de-individualized normality[71]. That is to say, the concrete others and the responsible self, whose existence Heidegger does not deny, are concealed behind the passive *one*. Without disputing the relevance of *one* as a generalized horizon of understanding humans and human behaviour it can and should be noted that to reflect on social existence from that perspective enforces and may generate a misperception of our actual consociates[72].

Let me now try another approach to the identification of things, activities and situations in everyday life, starting with sense perception. It is undeniable that sense qualities play a role when we identify this as that, despite and because of the ongoing changes and mixed character of concrete environments. I shall first take a step back to the rationalist model criticized by Merleau-Ponty and others. After an outline of that approach, I move towards an understanding of synaesthetic and synthetic features of perception. According to this view, the co-operation of different senses must be understood as relative to incarnated and situated perception or, in other words, a body which inhabits an environment.

It is a commonplace that humans have five senses: vision, hearing, feeling or touch, smell, and taste. In the modern tradition, these have been classified as higher or lower, primary or secondary, distant or proximate senses. The classifications are based on the character of what is sensed, of the sensory organs, and of the relation between organ and object. The overall emphasis is on rational control and on the possibility of objectively assessing the certainty and accuracy of what is perceived. This also means that the less (emotionally) influenced the perceiver is by what she perceives, the higher the sense is ranked. A distant sense, such as vision, is thus highly valued while taste, where the object becomes part of the body, is not. The clearer the separation of perceiver and perceived, the better the sense. The

difference between higher and lower senses is also referred to according to the character of the information they communicate. Whereas vision and hearing communicate both sense qualities and complex structures, the lower senses, that is, taste, smell and touch, communicate only separate qualities; there is no scheme on whose basis they could be related[73]. The higher senses are considered cognitively more valuable because they present us with forms[74].

The rationalist model separates the senses from each other and isolates perception from its context. Further, it rests on the assumption that the cognitive import of the sense impression is independent from the context and act of perception. Although the use of smells in various cultural contexts is underdeveloped and unsophisticated at least in the West, this does not mean that smells could not be bearers of cultural meaning beyond a direct reference to an object[75]. The smell of fresh birch leaves is, in Finland, evocative not just of birches but also of the sauna or of Midsummer, depending on context. Cultural meaning may be based on praxis and convention, thus symbolic in the sense of C.S. Peirce, without being verbally stated[76].

The rationalist approach to perception is contemporary with the scientific and technical approach to the world which developed in the seventeenth century. This is accompanied by a separation of mind and matter and an "exclusion of consciousness from the subject matter of science"[77]. Mental activity is understood to take place in the mind which, separated from the body and the world, affects these "from outside"[78]. The dominance of vision is originally a dominance of the mind over the senses; the notion of sight in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries is in fact, as Jonathan Crary shows, "anti-optical"[79]. At that time, knowledge and truth were also connected to the idea of manipulating or interfering with the object. Hannah Arendt describes the situation in the following way:

> *It was an instrument, the telescope, a work of man's hands, which finally forced nature to yield its secrets. (...) After being and appearance had parted company and truth was no longer supposed to appear (...) there arose a veritable necessity to hunt for truth behind deceptive appearances. (...) In order to be certain one had to* make sure, *and in order to know one had to do.*[80]

The rationalist model of truth is directed towards abstract and generalizable knowledge, and adopts the third-person perspective where the question, according to Searle, is not "What is it to have a belief?" or "What is it to have a desire?", but "Under what conditions would we from outside attribute beliefs, desires, etc., to some *other* system?"[81]. This objectifying approach disconnects perceiver and perceived from the actual situation, where meaning is both contextual and sedimented. The temporal and intentional side of perception is lost when subjectivity is discarded, and so a distinction between coded and experienced meaning is lost. For in the third-person perspective, meaning exists only as part of given, articulated systems which are constitutive of individual experience and action. But in perception and experience, meaning is not merely actualized, it is also generated. Merleau-Ponty points to this aspect when he observes that there is, in addition to conventional symbolism a natural symbolism of the body, a "natural teleology" where meaning is latent rather than manifest. The body should not be seen as a "constructed machine", as cybernetics does, for "it constructs itself".[82]

This may be compared to Polanyi's description of the organism which, interacting with its environment, is constantly making sense of its surroundings. In this activity, meaning is both sedimented and constantly assumed. There is a "fiduciary rootedness of all rationality"[83], in science as well as in everyday skills. The tacit and personal component means that the perceiver or knower trusts both his body and the world, setting himself out into it, committing himself to it. It must be noted that to view knowledge as an art of knowing is, on the whole, a practical perspective. Polanyi and J.J. Gibson put a stronger emphasis on the active side of perception than Merleau-Ponty: the subject is more or less awake all the time[84]. In Gibson's ecological approach to perception the senses are seen as perceptual systems, and the environment is described as consisting of "*opportunities* for perception, of *available* information, of *potential* stimuli"[85]. In the concrete world, we use our senses together, moving the body or its parts - hand, nose, tongue - towards things or what we take to be the sources of sensory stimuli. To feel a smell, I may turn my head, to locate a sound, shut my eyes. Neither activity is passive, although each is certainly receptive, and in both I am like any other animal[86].

Models such as these can better illuminate our relation to the environment than the rationalist model, which is philosophically questionable and particularly problematic in the complicated and mixed contexts of environmental perception and everyday life. Although everyday reality presents a wealth of impressions, we do not live in a chaos but inhabit a world where we perceive and recognize objects, things and situations. Actual perception challenges the distinction between the senses suggested by the rationalist model. As Neil Campbell notes, "[t]he sense of taste often fails to be discriminating enough to identify and individuate objects. But then of course the same can be said of sight. Just think of the last time you mistook the salt for the sugar."[87] In salt and sugar, the defining and decisive feature is one of taste, not visual appearance: not all forms are in essence visual.

The cognitive value of the different senses in a particular situation is dependent on the perceiver's experiences and interests. On a spring morning, the farmer who draws his breath perceives newly sown fields, fresh grass, tractor oil, dung and animals, whereas his urban cousin feels only annoyance, being out of place and surrounded by unpleasant and meaningless smells. In an art museum, an unhabituated person is as uncomfortable among the contextless objects as the urbanite on the farm. An unfamiliar environment may be felt as inhuman and meaningless, without horizon, perhaps not even considered as worth approaching[88]. To take another multisensuous example, we do not infer from colours, forms or movements that we are in the presence of a cow but feel it, in an immediate and global way. However, this immediate feeling or recognition - which can be mistaken - may take place either through hearing the cow moo, through visual perception or through smell. This not only points to the evocative power of sensory elements but also illuminates the co-operation of the senses in our perception of things[89].

In each situation, our environment is a whole which appears and where separate things appear to us. Sense qualities interact and shape the overall quality of the situation, the atmosphere, as Gernot Böhme calls it, pointing out that in environmental perception situatedness (*Befindlichkeit*) is a more fundamental 'sense' than vision, hearing, etc. The openness of the perceiver towards the environment illuminates synaesthetic perception, for to perceive a colour is first of all to exist, or to find oneself (*sich befinden*) in the field of influence of that colour. The influence is not restricted to one sense and might be attained in some other way than through the colour.[90] If the concrete, situated body connects the senses, it is no wonder that disregard for this body leads to neglect and rejection of the more global aspects of perception. This also suggests that colour contributes to the character of a space in a more than local way. When I leave my house, its light green walls embrace me from behind even when I do not look at them.

Another notion related to the total impact of perceived things is 'affordances' which Gibson uses to refer to "what things furnish, for good or for ill". Affordances are learnt through experience and experimentation, where the child learns "what things are manipulable and how they can be manipulated, what things are hurtful, what things are edible (...) what objects can be used as the means to obtain a goal, or to make other desirable objects, or to make people do what he wants them to do. In short, the human observer learns to detect what have been called the values or meanings of things".[91] Affordances are possibilities which cannot be objectified as things or features, but which in much the same way as atmosphere characterize objects or situations. As an example, one could take Jan Gehl's characterization of Venice: "the entire city is sittable"[92]. The perception of affordances depends on the perceiver's experiences and interests, but especially if it is granted that there are environmental imaginative as well as practical affordances, a certain degree of inattention or absentmindedness may be more conducive to their perception than to keep hold of one's preconceived interests.

Attention and inattention represent an alternative to the rationalist understanding of perception, but taken as a pair they also complement the idea of a 'praktognostic' attitude[93]. On the other hand, attention is particularly illuminating in the practicable register, where we turn to the world as agents and interpreters. In taking hold of and utilizing things and environments, the question whether we perceive the object as a whole, or whether our understanding coincides with it or not, is not very relevant[94]. That the bus takes us to a certain destination or that these mushrooms or berries are good to eat is enough. In activities we primarily attend to what we are doing, not to all the sensations that come with the activity, or to the full reality of objects.

Polanyi's distinction between the focal awareness of the nail we are driving and our subsidiary awareness of the feeling in our hand is illuminating[95]. This is all very well, but it must be added that we perform many activities without full attention. Thus John R. Searle notes that the skilled carpenter need not focus his full attention on hammering, although he must certainly attend to it[96]. Practical activities which we know well rather free our attention to more distant concerns which may have nothing to do with the immediate work situation. But as soon as the activity is either more complicated and unpredictable, or simply unfamiliar, a fuller attention and engagement of the subject is called for.

In such situations the world is no longer just a world-within-reach, it is also a world that reaches for us. In practical activities we project our goals on a world we take to be manipulable, but it may strike back, showing incongruity, resistance, even antagonism. The nail, for example, escapes the hammer, which instead hits my thumb[97]. This "uprising of the things," to speak with the poet Henry Parland, is one face of the reciprocity of body and environment[98]. When an unpractised person changes a light bulb, this provides risks and pleasures unknown to the electrician: the roundness of the bulb, the balancing of the body, the care to avoid electric shocks and the satisfaction when the work is done. In physical work, as in walking or running - activities during which we use our body to do something or get somewhere - the feelings in the body and the perception of the situation become part of each other. In general, proprioception - the perception of one's own body - is unthinkable without an environment: the feedback to our activities comes from there[99]. A runner enjoys the landscape - trees, buildings, uphill, donwhill, sun, wind - through and with his body. The air that enters his lungs, the oxygen that runs through his body, the sweat on his face are produced together by him and the environment. Such experiences become part of the landscape's sedimented meaning, of its depth, even when it is looked upon from a window. But there is no question that with environments sensuous presence is primary.

To walk or row in order to get from one place to another is, like physical work, distinguished by its seriousness and goal-directedness from leisurely activities where we just exercise our bodies or skills. Working, one can accomplish something which is meaningful in a larger context. Jogging is, compared to this, an ego-centred activity, although in jogging one may be more open to the environment and disinterested in the sense of having no defined, external goals. A feeling of freedom, which is related to a state of absentmindedness, a rambling of thoughts, can very well be obtained in walking from home to one's office. A regular bodily activity sets the mind and perception free, and if the situation is rich in stimuli, yet familiar, this

is further enhancing.

There is a certain heterogeneity of the subject even when she attends to an activity: other concerns, other influences and perceptions are around. But there is also a potential alertness: inattentive to the surroundings, a thought, a voice, or some other unexpected element suddenly makes her alert. If environmental perception is a process of feedback where attention is directed at and attracted by different elements, there is an unconscious side of the environment that is not the opposite of the conscious, but its potential and reserve[100]. Opacity, depth and transcendence do not mean that the environment is simply mute or chaotic, only that it is characterized by multiple orders which are not accessible to us simultaneously. If attention allows us to perceive, it also cuts off our access to those aspects which we do not attend to. But this does not make attention identical to projection, for there is a presence to what we perceive, a passivity in the activity. This passivity is not just manifest in our following a tune or a smell, but more importantly in the inattentiveness which lurks in the margins of attention. In attending we direct ourselves and turn towards objects, but the whole perceiving body is slow, it does not quite follow, it takes its time and finds its own points of contact with the flesh of the world. Without this slowness, we would not sense the world.

I shall soon address the anonymous, unarticulated side of environmental experience, and here only add some points about the interdependence of bodily existence and perception. We can experience ourselves as bodies only in relation to things in the world. To state that the tree makes me visible contains the insight that to perceive it, I must myself have a moving body[101]. Also distances, measures and scales are dependent on embodied existence, so that there is a sense in which, in human experience, magnitude is relative not to abstract comparisons of objects or stretches, but to the interdependence of time, effort and space in climbing a hill or walking over a square[102]. Visual estimations of size are based on tacit assumptions about how long it would take to get to a certain place. Further, similarly to our bodies, things appear in different sensuous registers: with the lemon there is colour, weight, smell and taste, but also the sound of falling or its resilience upon being squeezed. As we move towards an object, we can touch what we first only saw[103]. Concreteness and locality characterize also other areas of perception than vision: we localize and identify smells or sounds relative to an "object or region which is regarded as their source"[104]. In this concrete way, the real world is tangible, shared flesh.

To get along in the world, to identify and handle things and situations, action must be interaction. Even when perception only identifies, it cannot be mere projection or recognition, for there is always the risk of misperception; things and persons do not adjust to our preconceptions. Therefore a thinking that thematizes the practicable field must already be open to other sides of experience. Further, one should note that if the practical approach is not enough as a picture of human existence, it is also not in any evident way the most basic field. There are other levels that are just as necessary and integral to human life.

Felt space

In *Le visible et l'invisible*, Merleau-Ponty abandons the world of the subject, who perceives and acts among things, and takes instead flesh as his point of departure. He turns away from identity, from things in their thingness, but alongside the materiality of flesh and in it there is a renewed emphasis on spirit, reflecting on and interrogating the world, yet never becoming one with it. The central notion is not perception, but vision.[105] The invisible, which instantiates sense, is in-visible, in the visible, inhabiting and animating it as "sole movement" which holds existence "as a spontaneous *word* holds a whole future or *a single grasp* of the hand holds a whole piece [*morceau*] of space"[106]. In Merleau-Ponty, there is always openness between subject and world, so that the world is accessible to the subject. But it can be questioned whether even such non-objectifying descriptions as the one just quoted do full justice to human experience. Is there not also darkness that is and remains neutral and mute, that never becomes our adversary?

In this section, I shall discuss the environment as unspecified, whole and atmospheric, not furnished and practicable, and the subject as only half awake, in the margins of attention, feeling rather than knowing, without direction, falling into reality. Anonymity, affectivity and opening are central . Wholeness, here, does not amount to a totality; feeling is characteristically local, it belongs to a situation which it also permeates. I begin beyond flesh, with Emmanuel Levinas' descriptions of *there is* (*il y a*): a region where the body is not, a dimension which negates the subject. Then I take up affectivity and anonymity, themes which are unthinkable without bodies. Merleau-Ponty's later thinking offers useful insights into these. Finally, I make some reflections on inhabited space, the element of atmosphere: an opening which turns us back on ourselves, but beyond personhood.

As Levinas describes "the fact of *there is*" in *De l'existence à l'existant*, it precedes and encompasses being and nothingness[107]. *There is* is the sphere from which the subject as agent or existent stands forth, but in itself, *there is* is "existence without world". It can thus be compared to notions of the real or reality as described, for instance, in psychoanalytic theory[108]. Such a real is the raw, unarticulated side of any environment, as opposed to culture, and related, but not identical, to nature as I understand it. Compared to form, *there is* is material, but it is not dead matter, not opposed to life. *There is* is, says Levinas, the throng of being "[b]ehind the luminosity of forms through which the beings already refer to our 'inside'"[109]. It remains behind and does not open itself to the rays of light and vision: it resists. Impersonal, murmuring, dark, *there is* "brings us back to the absence of God, to the absence of any being"[110]. In such a state the subject is depersonalized and therefore horrified, not because of the possibility of death but because of the universality of being where I do not matter. A carcass is horrifying not because it demonstrates that someone died, but because it "already announces its return"[111]. Obscure, *there is* is felt as a presence, but not of any particular thing or quality: there is no content. "It is like a density of the empty, like a murmuring of silence"[112].

Also *Totalité et Infini* contains descriptions of *there is*, but here the maternal, nourishing side of the undifferentiated is brought to the fore. To let oneself fall into inarticulate sensuousness is not necessarily horrifying. It can mean enjoyment, *jouissance*, happiness about life, breathing, seeing, feeling; so that in falling, "one escapes life towards life"[113]. In these descriptions, *there is* is still the sphere of non-identity, but as part of it, without resistance, we participate in the play of consumption and nourishment which is necessary for our own bodily and psychic sustenance, and for the whole. For "[t]he consumption of nourishments is the nourishment of life", and consumption here implies bodily as well as spiritual needs[114]. It also points to dependence: while the subject is negated as ego, is without voice and vision, without the rationality which makes a world, he is at the same time sustained and supported. This is how darkness reigns in *there is*: as blindness, as a state where the world has lost its form. There is no positing of a subject and an object in *there is*: sensation is direct, is openness, not relation between a this and a that. Here, sense is not a direction I take; I can only find myself in it. In this sense, *there is* is a primary realm. It is also kin to affectivity, not identical, but overlapping. "Sense qualities are not just the sensed; they are the sensing, like affective states."[115]

Assuming that one can meaningfully point to a register of environmental experience where feeling and flesh, rather than identification and thingness, reign, I shall take up some additional ideas from Merleau-Ponty. Starting from a broadly understood sexuality these illuminate affectivity and anonymity in felt space. In the chapter on the body as a sexual being in *Phénomenologie de la perception* Merleau-Ponty discusses the affective dimension of human existence not as an alternative, but as a complement to the dimensions of action and understanding: together with the cognitive and the practical with which it is intertwined, sexuality is a basic "sector of behaviour"[116]. Although affectivity is presented under the heading of sexuality, this refers to something much wider in scope than an everyday notion of sex. Sexuality is as inseparable a part of our bodily being as the ability to move and act, or as intelligence; it is a dimension and possibility of every human situation. "There is no surpassing of sexuality as there is no sexuality closed upon itself." Sexuality is not only related to our bodies, but is "that sector of our experience which apparently is meaningful and real only for us, that is, our affective environment."[117]

Sexuality cannot here be understood only as what is, in one way or another, primarily relevant to sexual intercourse or felt in the "sexual parts"[118] of our bodies. Such a view is too narrow and often mechanistic, to make sense of Merleau-Ponty's conception. On the other hand, if the term 'sexuality' is replaced by affective environment or affective dimension, we might lose sight of its intentional character. The affective environment, as a whole and through its elements, exists for us through desire and love. But this does not mean that our bodily existence is intentional in a strong sense. The life of the body is anonymous, but never totally so; it precedes our relations to others; it offers openings towards the world, but also the possibility of withdrawal[119].

In the affective dimension, the body is central. It is the point from which we perceive, the ground where sense is generated and from which it is articulated. Before meaning, the body is there: I exist in this space before I start thinking about it. The body is our first environment compared to any other, and the experience of space is first subjective; space and its directions first exist as inhabited and acted out through the body, not as abstract[120]. If this is accepted, affectivity, feeling or emotion are part of human existence from the start. This can be compared to Greimas' and Fontanille's understanding of proprioceptivity as a mediating capacity of the body which brings together outer and inner feelings, "the state of things" and "the state of the soul", and which is a condition of the relations of feeling, action and understanding[121]. It is important to notice the active character of proprioceptivity: the body must not be understood in terms of an object but as a lived body.

Glen A. Mazis, commenting on Merleau-Ponty, claims that oneiric space, the space of dreams, which exists only as experienced and unfolds together with events, gives us "access to the way in which space first comes to be". At this point of experience, no axes exist except those that depart from our body; space is "an emergence of ways in which we are embedded".[122] Such bodily, concrete experience of space precedes a sense of place, if place implies meaning, and as a condition for meaningful orientation, it is an important element in the generation of places[123]. With Mazis:

> *Seeing the e-motional vitality of space makes it possible to understand how "the 'human world' ceases to be a metaphor and becomes more what it really is, the seat and as it were the* ***homeland*** *of our thoughts"*: our situatedness is not projected upon some space standing "there," but rather space* ***becomes in the pulsations*** *which turn the face of things towards us in welcome, rejection, or the many shades of e-motional encounter.*[124]

In the affective dimension - as with *there is* - there is no detached contemplation of qualities which manifest themselves as supposed essences, but instead a pervasive and involved understanding (in the weak sense), an ongoing orientation in a situation where no order is independent from the subject. Disconnected from an ego, affectivity and subjectivity exist in a space which is shared rather than divided between subject and object. Thus affectivity becomes part of things or spaces, animating them, as when we talk of the atmosphere of a building or the style of an object. Not surprisingly, movement and activity are relevant. As sexuality for Merleau-Ponty is "constantly present as an atmosphere", "as an odour or as a sound"[125], so emotional ways of being accompany persons. But "[t]hings also have this *nuance*, a slight atmospheric deviation, this *way* of being" as Mazis says, a way we "can feel, rather than ever conceptualize."[126]

In the realm of affectivity and feeling, the subject as experiencer is not, then, an *ego cogito* or a historical person. One is, rather, in "the generality of the Sensible as such", in "this inborn anonymity of Myself" which Merleau-Ponty calls flesh and which establishes a "fundamental narcissism" between viewer and viewed[127]. This narcissism is innocent, for it does not project an identity between what I take myself or the world to be, it does not claim or state anything. It is not about mental contents, wishes or memories, but about finding oneself in the world as part of it. Yet it is not an abstract experience, but connected to the here and now of moment and situation: an "inauguration of the *where* and the *when*"[128]. This realm of affectivity and sensation can be compared to Levinas' *there is*, with which is not identical. With Merleau-Ponty, we have a *there is* entered by the subject, no longer neutral, but animated. Therefore, anonymity should not be seen as a limitation but, rather, as a possibility for broadening and refining the register of feeling.

According to Merleau-Ponty, the proper life of the body is characterized by anonymity. Because I am an embodied being I can at each moment withdraw from the world, from my projects and my recognizable, social identity "into that anonymous life which sustains my personal life."[129] The anonymity of the affective dimension points to what is not thematic and may resist becoming so, thus remaining a substratum of personal existence.[130] Anonymity is thus an aspect of subjective experience, less defined but therefore also more open to intersubjective strata of meaning than cognition, action and identification, which tend to focus on definite entities or objects. Further, anonymity characterizes both what is experienced and the experiencer: with affectivity, emotion and atmosphere, the separation of subject and object is cancelled. Emotional qualities encountered in the world are attributes of situations and humans alike: sombre, gay, threatening. "Sensuous qualities are not only the sensed; they are the sensing, in the same way as affective states", says Levinas[131]. In this particular way, the relation of subject and world in affectivity is harmonious although not necessarily peaceful: there is attunement, irrespective of the precise affective content. If I experience a space as hostile, I feel hostility in and with the space and am myself affected by it.

The notion of flesh, central in Merleau-Ponty's later thinking, demonstrates the interrelatedness of human existence and the world. This notion is not centred on affectivity, but is about human experience as a whole. Still it illuminates the affective register, the space and ways of being of things and subjects, the atmosphere and style in which we do what we do, see what we see. We are flesh, and we are in flesh which is also flesh of the world: flesh is best described as element, not as matter, and also not as a sum of material or spiritual facts[132]. As such, flesh is indefinite and without limits, but it is also what makes things appear and gives them sense. Through the fleshiness of the world, there is an infinitude, a refusal of finishing in the finite, provided that we consider reality in its concrete density: things are never seen in totality, appearing cannot be given a term[133].

In the context of perception flesh usually suggests nearness; being with and by the world; openness, not projection. In Aristotle, flesh is the medium of touch[134]. These aspects are present in Merleau-Ponty, but to him vision, not touch, is intimately connected to flesh. He rejects a simplistic criticism of the hegemony of vision, refuses to refuse cognition and instead puts the subject out in the world. Visibility means that the world gives itself to understanding, but without giving up its density. The invisible is in the visible, inhabiting it. Seeing, in *Le visible et l'invisible*, is closely related to, even is a kind of reflection that can be described metaphorically as rays of light which precede and make knowledge possible, a knowledge confined neither to abstraction nor sensuousness.[135] Note further that flesh is also a temporal notion, with consequences for history. "There is no analysis that could be the last because there is a flesh of history, because in history, as in our own body, everything counts and has a bearing"[136].

If it is important to remember that Merleau-Ponty's flesh should be understood in relation to all areas of human existence, it is scarcely wrong to find it particularly accurate for describing experiences where feeling and the body are not suppressed. This comprises emotional and sexual experience, but not just these. Lecturing, walking, or reading all include, potentially, sensuousness and affectivity, atmosphere, ways of being, doing and responding. In any context, affective qualities are felt as directly present to us, without mediation, which does not mean that they are independent of cues. There is nothing mystical about feeling the atmosphere of a situation or the mood of a person, just as there is nothing mystical when the shepherd "feels that there will be a storm"[137]. These situations involve tacit knowing and skills that are trained, perhaps even acquired in perceptive interaction with the world.[138].

On the other hand, the idea that the world, and particularly the natural world, offers elements, images, situations and channels for the articulation of experiences that would otherwise remain unarticulated, is interesting[139]. "It is the world which holds me, sustains me, identifies me, that gives experience a shape"[140]. Glen A. Mazis also suggests that emotion should be described as flow, with water as the central metaphor. He emphasizes the motion of *e-motion*, but also the lack of autonomy in the subject, who is instead continually influenced by others in a reality of which he is a part and which is interpersonal rather than just personal[141]. This emotional dimension of experience can be characterized as transitory and simultaneous; momentaneous, but where the moment involves past and future. Instead of disconnectedness there is continuity and connections: continuity with what

went before and what will follow, connections to the others of this world, human and nonhuman elements alike.

To return to flesh: an important point is that it shows how vision, perception or cognition are connected to their other - to the invisible, the unperceived, the not-known, the forgotten - and embedded in a situation which is in part inarticulate, but not beyond articulation[142]. It suggests that the distinction between conscious and unconscious in a human being is only provisional. Exclusive alternatives of a free and self-sufficient, rational ego and a dependent, addictive and mastered subject are false. In the affective dimension the subject is not present as a "strategic ego" but as a "self in process"[143]. And is not this subject present all the way into rational decisions? The notion of flesh does not replace rational thinking with anonymity and feeling, but reminds us that "[r]eason is promiscuous: it has inter-course with the body, with the perceptual, with the imaginary, with the memorial, and even with that ever-in-circulation e-motion"[144]. To call the subject and the world flesh is the opposite of reduction: it opposes the identification of a basis of being, whether that be material and concrete, or spiritual and abstract. On the metalevel of reflection, it provides space for the unfolding of multifaceted, multilevelled experience, but is not a statement about one fundamental truth.

On the basic level of experience, space is opening not just around, but from the body. Greimas and Fontanille point out that the emotional realm has to do with being rather than doing, and they describe it as space[145]. The space of emotion is an experienced space, space permeated by subjectivity and intimately connected to the body. Such bodily space is different from Euclidean, objective space, which demands a third-person perspective and is neutral, even "privative, i.e., deworlded"[146]. Bodily or inhabited space is directional, but in comparison to a place its contents are undefined: even the most dull and deindividuated area or nonplace is inhabited by the embodied, situated human experiencer[147]. On the other hand, inhabited space is always concrete, it is here and now; it is characterized by whatever features are present, however anonymous or undefined they are. In this sense, inhabited space is not a general quality but a particular situation.

On the other hand, space is always opening, which is a form of transcendence. I do not have a space, I am the centre of space which I inhabit and thus maintain, and the space in which I am is necessarily shared. But it is shared only with concrete individuals that might occupy it, for inhabited space is accessible only to finite bodies. The space of affectivity opens avenues towards the so-called ordinary world, including the temporal dimensions of built environments and other people; thus Mazis' description of experienced emotional qualities as "entrances" carries epistemological weight[148]. Operative intentionality implies that there is a meaningful directedness of the human subject towards the world, even without particular signifieds. One can be open to things to happen without particular expectations, open, as in nature.

If inhabited space opens intersubjectively towards other people, it also includes strands of experience that originate in nature rather than culture, whether that nature is human or nonhuman[149]. Nature is environment, but it is also body: an anonymous, unnamed side of what and where we are. So an awareness of space can throw us back on ourselves, not as persons with specified identities, but on the question we are, in the opacity beneath conscious decisions and acts. There need be nothing mystical about this, and such experience can be either frightening or affirming: dark streets, warm sun, fresh sea water all feed and feed back on bodily existence. For the feeling subject, *there is* is not negation, but opening , and it is also only against it that an *ego cogito* can exist. But further, only in openness can I be addressed and touched by the other.

Response and otherness

Let us, for a moment, lend an eye to a surprising and overwhelming, unexpected experience; an experience the subject cannot produce, which contains elements new to him, and which enriches him or changes his world. A.J. Greimas calls such a moment one of *esthésis* and considers it prior to language and social codes because it is authentic and revelatory: "The moment of *revelation* - of esthésis - has come. The hidden, the unsuspected finds itself established as the condition of truth."[150] Greimas here comments upon a passage from Italo Calvino's novel *Palomar*, where the main character passes a topless sunbathing woman on the beach. Searching for the correct attitude towards a naked breast, Palomar experiments by walking past her several times with different attitudes - but the confrontation with female nudity retains its element of surprise. The aesthetic component turns perception into an interactive event: no more does Palomar grasp the breast than it grasps him.

Calvino uses the word *guizzo*, or "glistening" to point out what happens when the eye grazes the skin of the woman, and the word is important for Greimas. A glistening can be perceived only for a moment; it is in fact only a moment, a touch of water and light, a reflection. Reflections depend on the direction of light cast back from surfaces relative to a perceiving eye, thus are in essence appearances. In the experience of Palomar, the initiative comes from the world. The man does not go out looking for breasts and if he did, there would probably be no glistening. On the other hand, the glistening comes about during a walk where he deliberately takes a disinterested attitude, bracketing the object of perception - the breast - from its cultural and erotic context[151]. He tries to act innocently, to transform himself into a 'pure eye'.

The lesson of the passage is that the other, as an object of perception, cannot be grasped or totalized, even through deliberate innocence or disinterestedness. When Palomar passes for the fourth time, the woman rises and leaves. But if Palomar had passed just once she or, rather, the breast, could have crystallized into an image: fragmented, frozen, totalized. The woman's historical and social individuality would have been reduced. This can happen either through the identification of a person as of a certain type, or negatively, when the other person is seen as radically other, as my opposite. But as another person, the woman on the beach is both different and similar to the perceiver. The passage shows the sensuous as a limit to ourselves and a reminder of otherness, which can be faced in the other person or sensed in the substantial fullness of material existence. In this section, I shall concentrate on otherness originating in other persons, a theme which is relevant not only for the habitat as a co-inhabited space, but also for the experience of artefacts as created and used objects. Further, it should be noted at this point that even if individuality is primarily related to persons, it might also be applied to environments or places which demonstrate natural or cultural density.

With experiences of otherness and individuality, sensitivity implicates responding, and responding implicates responsibility. In Levinas' description, the subject does not act in a world of ready-to-hands but rather puts himself out to be used, to carry, to sustain and support. This ethical stance originates in embodied, finite existence, where the individual faces another which he cannot grasp, at most touch and be touched by. Thus receptivity and passivity supplement the intentional stance, which alone could not account for otherness. I shall discuss these themes mainly through Levinas, but first briefly introduce them through Martin Buber's understanding of the I-Thou-relationship, which is less demanding but also more open to applications outside the social, interhuman world[152]. To relate to something as to a Thou is essentially different from relating to an It: the Thou never becomes an object, can never be defined by the I, so that the I-Thou relation is in essence a relation of reciprocity and interdependence.

> *The Thou encounters me. But I enter into a direct relationship to it. Thus the relationship is one of being elected and electing, passion and action in one. Thus an act of the whole being, a cancellation of all partial actions and thereby of any sense of action - which is based in their limitation - it must approach passion.*
>
> *The basic word I-Thou can only be spoken with one's whole being. The gathering and fusion into a whole being can never take place through me, can never take place without me. I become at Thou; when I become I, I speak Thou.*[153]

As this passage makes clear, the relationship is equally dependent on the I and the Thou, so that it cannot be projective or one-sided. It requires an engagement of the whole person as directed and drawn towards an other, who remains outside conceptual grasp. Practical interests cannot be part of the relation: I must not make claims on the Thou. Buber's Thou may even appear more like a spiritual than a concrete being; seemingly existing without coordinates, outside a spatially and temporally structured world[154]. But this is true only in the sense that the Thou is necessarily undecidable, so that the undecidability of the Thou is even a condition of the relation. A tree can, as well as a human being, be the other part of an I-Thou relationship[155].

Only the I of the I-Thou relationship is related in the stronger sense of the word: the I of the I-It relationship is, rather, 'autonomous'. But autonomy is illusory. Describing the ideal process of becoming what one is, Buber points out that this is possible only in relation to others: dialogue is our truth, a truth inherent in the activity of exceeding our limits towards each other[156]. Buber's emphasis on relating and his belief in reciprocity has been criticized by Levinas, who instead emphasizes asymmetry and the ethical demands which are connected to it[157]. But even if Levinas' criticism is well-founded, some belief in the possibility of meeting and having a sincere relationship with another person is necessary for human communication, also when we believe that in such communication one can never exactly understand what the other means. In order to get close, one must not forget that fusion is impossible; on the other hand, one can only approach what is not identical to oneself.

Compared to perception, where a subject turns to the world and investigates it or interacts with it, Levinas' order is reversed: the subject is exposed, subjected to another whom he does not know. One is awakened, summoned, called. The situation, especially as described in Levinas' later work, is disturbing and demanding. For Levinas, ethics is primary in and for human existence and remains so: the ethical concern is never asleep. It is an embodied concern, a felt concern: rooted in the subject's carnal and finite, enjoying and suffering existence[158]. It cannot be enough emphasized that the other, for Levinas, is another human being, a subjectivity; on the other hand he allows for the mediation of subjectivity in works of art, for example in a piece of sculpture[159]. Levinas' ideas are important and illuminating for understanding the human habitat, and I shall make some suggestions about their application, but first I want to present some points related to sensibility, the face, subjectivity, responsibility and individuality.

For Levinas, sensation and sensibility are the basis of human existence, although as such, they are not enough for a properly human life. But the primary value of sensation is not that it is a prerequisite for getting along, acting and cognizing. The interesting point is, rather, the possibility of pure sensation: how in art, for example, sensible qualities do not serve the constitution of an object but are simply what they are[160]. This kind of openness, the acceptance to remain in-between, without conclusion, in the nearness of something one does not know, can be compared to the solace the caress brings the sick: it "does not promise an end to suffering" but rescues the sick from his condemnation to himself[161]. The caress searches, but does not grasp, and goes towards the invisible[162].

Sensibility is a 'capacity' of the subject, but this term must be placed in quotation marks, for it does not serve a particular purpose. Sensibility places us inseparably in the world. One side is enjoyment and dependence, sustained by the earth, without questioning, "I am myself, I am here, at home, habitation, immanence in the world"[163]. Another side of sensibility, the ethical, is susceptibility and vulnerability, a break in identity, a question and demand[164]. That side is at the centre of Levinas' thinking and, for him, at the centre of human existence. Our sensibility is a receptivity to the demands of the other, offering oneself and suffering, since one can never meet these demands, never give enough of oneself or take enough responsibility. Our subjectivity is being subjected to the other, but without the hope of controlling the situation or finding a final solution. One is always inadequate, yet one must continue. The asymmetry of the relation of subject and others - that while my responsibility is without limits, I can demand nothing from them - is mirrored in the subject's naked unicity. To be a subject is to be here, without protection, even without identity, exposed and passive[165].

One is exposed and responsible infinitely; there is no end to this, no point of final rest. One is also responsible through one´s own consent: nobody tells us to be responsible and nobody could, by force or by law, establish responsibility in another. But, on the other hand, responsibility - and life in general - are described by Levinas as local and finite: infinity is encountered through what passes in and around us. "The *in* of the Infinite is not a simple negation, but time and humanity", it suggests both "the *non* and the *in*".[166] The focal point of this encounter is the face of a concrete but unknown other, the neighbour's face. Before it, "I am guilty or innocent"[167]. The face remains unknown but is also expressive. The sensibility of the subject is complementary to the expressiveness of the other, which does not mean that one knows the other. The face addresses me and awakens me to responsibility because it is different, because it is not a representation and resists conceptualization[168]. "The face is present in its refusal to be a content."[169]

For Levinas, the face, with the ethical stance it establishes, is the primary distinction, before rational knowledge. "Metaphysics precedes ontology" means that the ethical relation or the acknowledgement of alterity is given priority before knowledge, which through identification controls and silences the other[170]. Knowledge is not only power, as Francis Bacon said, it is also violence, and this is true especially for communities and habitats. Ethics is here, on the other hand, not about making judgements or applying rules: it remains a challenge and a reminder.

If cognition presupposes the presence of its object, the ethical stance acknowledges and feels proximity, no more. In a different vocabulary, Levinas' proximity can be compared to 'double presence': situations where the subject, in person, faces an object which is here, but as felt rather than known. It is the subject which, in such presence, is given over to the object: I am present to and in the presence of, but without mastery.[171]

The face of the other is near to me, but preserves its distance and separateness. The alterity of the other always escapes me; as in the caress, the situation is one of searching, not finding. There is a bracketing of substance, identity and personality, "beyond intentionality"[172]. But it would be wrong to think that the transcendence of the other is just assumed by me, as in an attitude I generously decide to take. Transcendence is irrefutable, a reality that works on us. Alterity appears as traces left by time, in time, as in the "wrinkled skin, trace of itself" of a face that is still young[173]. Time subjects me as well as the other; it is our ultimate subjector. Our subjectivity is one of aging, so that the unicity of each is not based in a lasting identity, but in the responsibility we assume without choosing it, accepting a situation where no one can replace us[174]. The individuality of the subject is one's irreplaceability, but in offering oneself, one does this without regard for one's personal history, for one's self.

In *Autrement qu'être ou au-delà de l'essence*, Levinas describes disinterestedness as characteristic of the subject who exposes himself in speech, or Saying, addressing another. To be disinterestedly is to be without identity, de-positing oneself, so that one does not occupy a space but leaves it open[175]. In communication one gives oneself, without shelter, and speech is significant because it is an activity where a subject addresses another. That Saying precedes the Said means that the established meaning of words is secondary to the activity of communication and expression.[176] Only if we acknowledge alterity do we risk ourselves in expression and communication, and only if we relate to the other as face can we act *with* him and not just on him[177]. But, in addition, there is the implication that responsive sensibility is necessary also for the full actualization of the subject. For it is only as inspired, as opening and giving ourselves, that we live fully, if at risk[178].

To be sensitive is to refuse to deny one's senses and corporeal, finite existence. It is also to refuse to deny one's responsibility and unicity. The subject is not reduced when disturbed. If one is stirred, one is not passivized; but wrenched away from "esthetic self-sufficiency, from its *here*, where it rests in peace", and transformed "into a creature"[179]. Levinas' thinking is importantly future-oriented, describing ethics as "an approach", artistic expression as "an essential event", or pointing out the need for "the arranging and assembling, the cultural act of man"[180]. Neither the world nor thinking nor culture can be finished or complete, and so the peace sought - the opposite of violence - is not stable but dynamic, demanding passivity, acceptance and response[181]. But in an everyday context, Levinas suggests, peace, as "a break in apperception-consciousness" can be established in a handshake, "an attuning of oneself to the other, a giving of oneself to him or her"[182].

Let me finally, after a few remarks on Levinas' relation to Merleau-Ponty, make some observations on the relevance of Levinasian otherness in experiencing environments. The patterns and directions of Levinas' thinking are not opposed to Merleau-Ponty, whom he both criticizes and appreciates. The axiological dimension is integral to both, but in Levinas more closely connected to ethics and personal responsibility. Common is also the idea that transcendence 'appears' in the finite, and the emphasis on the subject's activity and role in constituting and maintaining meaning and culture[183].

But in his emphasis on alterity, in its different forms, Levinas importantly complements Merleau-Ponty in ways which are relevant for understanding environmental experience. Our habitats are also strange to us, shared with unknown others, transparent and yet opaque, sedimented by natural processes and cultures we do not know very well. Further, in everyday environmental experience the valuable, meaningful, and desirable is often not defined or delimited in advance. We find our ways, continue and halt, depending on what comes in our way, which is not to deny the existence of preconceived goals.

In any cultural environment there is otherness, nonidentity. A city or a building, however thoroughly planned - and the more dramatically, the more it is planned - is always, in some parts or aspects, strange to 'itself'. In a city there are natural and cultural unplanned elements and features: weathering, wear, weeds, crime or creative 'misuse' of spaces. Compared to the present life, sedimentations of earlier ideals and earlier use are mostly perceptible on the streets, and there is also the heterogeneity of communal life, which is bigger or smaller, more or less apparent, but always there.

On the other hand, the human alterity we encounter is often not dramatically other but, rather, the difference of one's neighbours. We may know them a little, share spaces and situations; there is familiarity, but also a limit to how much we can and should know. Very concretely, peace here demands discretion and acknowledgement of the privacy of another's interior, whether this refers to his soul or his rooms. Other people are our consociates, but although we belong to the same area and culture, we are simultaneous with them rather than alike[184]. Meaningful social relations do not imply that we understand the other in any strong sense, as she understands herself, and if we cannot really know even ourselves, then to know the other in her individuality is even more impossible. We share language and other expressions and coexist with and through them, but as different individuals, from different points and histories. Understanding the other is approximation - because of the complexity and concreteness of the situation and the affective and sensuous components, which resist conceptualization.

Change is another basis for otherness[185]. The environment at large is always changing in some respect or in some part, so that even in the intimacy with one´s home area one must realize that the relation cannot be one of ownership. In fact, intimacy comes hand in hand with anonymity and alterations, which provide space for the subject to live her life. Often changes in the environment take place as additions, subtractions or transformations rather than as complete exchange, and in such cases one might feel that the character is preserved, or at least that there is continuation. In other cases, and particularly with modern building, an area may be bulldozed into unrecognizability. In such a case, continuity is obliterated while otherness becomes abstract: in order to be aware of a different, earlier life, one has to know that it existed. But regardless of what we know, the environment is always sedimented. If one lives a long time in a certain place, the familiarity of one's body with the environment becomes a basis and background against which changes appear: new shops, new people are received and embraced in its density.

To be in a place is more often to be in proximity than in the presence of something. Buildings of power, such as churches or palaces, manifest the institution they serve as a presence. But buildings which are less clearly identified, or where the institution does not impose itself over us but serves our daily needs, or where we do not know the inhabitants, are much more common. These exist around us and with us, sharing and constituting public space in much the same simultaneous way as our human consociates. The experienced character of buildings is importantly dependent on the life that goes on in them[186].

We do not interpret buildings before we use them. Also, any environment - built or unbuilt - is not there just for utilitarian purposes, but offers possibilities for lingering, inattentively. This may be realized separately from or simultaneously with our errands or work. Such lingering is not meaningless; on the contrary, it may be a way of sensitizing oneself - unawares - to the richness and inexhaustibility of the environment, which annuls any single interpretation that claims to encompass everything. The concrete, here and now, is transcended towards other concrete situations, and in this the world, as totality, unfolds, although never completely. The multiplicity of viewpoints is a social fact. Distracted, even disinterested, perception, on the edge of imagination, opens towards alterity - other people, other points, other experiences. To give priority to proximity before presence could thus in general help us to indicate "avenues in the world, channels, ways of happening, held open by the materiality of the world, to allow this [emotional linking of human with human] to occur and continue"[187].

Yet another kind of environmental otherness is related to buildings as artefacts and, more particularly, to architecture as an art. The notion of style can refer globally to a way of being of an artefact or a person. Also with artefacts it is often presumed that the ground or cause for the artefact's being as it is is a mentality or a personality behind the work. The presumption of a someone at work in or behind a building may be a conscious fiction, applied by a perceiver in order to get hold of the 'spirit' of the work or the place.[188] Regardless of this, such a presumption may be instrumental in getting a feel for the building. It is important to notice that the personality or spirit of an artefact is not strictly defined. To remain fruitful such a tool for imagination must, on the contrary, be allowed to remain proximate rather than fully present. A spirit of place is not grasped but experienced, in much the same way that affective qualities are.

As works of art generally, a work of architecture may assert or present itself as a quasi-subject. It then presents itself as expressive, as having a 'face' which is there before any single perception, demonstrating singularity and quiddity. But we do not, as sensitive perceivers, expect that we know the character or inner meaning of the work; we rather search for it and take it to

be there, near, but not known. Of course, a work of art is not inexhaustible in the way persons are, and it cannot deliberately withdraw or hide as humans do. But some parts and aspects of the work, and particularly of a building, nonetheless remain hidden: not just cellars or private rooms, but also pasts and futures.

Concrete existence

As inhabited, and from the point of view of human experience, any environment is radically interdependent with the subject who inhabits and perceives it. But although the subject is interdependent with the environment, she is not determined by it: it does not force her to adopt certain attitudes or ways of life[189]. The claim of interdependence is also not metaphysical but empirical and historical: the environment and humans become what they become through concrete and particular activities and events. In these concluding remarks to this chapter, I discuss environment and inhabitant together, since that seems to be the best way to point to the various elements and aspects of an inhabited environment and a situated subject. The pointing is sketchy: I repeat some ideas and open some new perspectives, which are pursued in later chapters.

The embedded subject is dependent on his environment and, in the final instance, on the world. If the world is transcendent, the subject becomes a subject with soft boundaries so that, as Merleau-Ponty says, "it is the same thing to be nothing and to inhabit the world"[190]. This is the subject as individual, indivisible, here and now. But this subject is situated also more prosaically: his situation is not unconditioned or general but specific and particular. The subject is not just a free spirit but also an awkward body, a load of memories and experiences, hopes, expectations, attachments. If it is not our individuality but our finitude that limits us, then finitude is also, as Levinas shows, what makes us unique. Also, it is only from the particularity of this life that my wishes and hopes are real. Taken together, individuality and finitude mean that while one cannot be anything nor everywhere, one can always transcend what one is at this moment. The aesthesiological body, which Merleau-Ponty describes in *Le visible et l'invisible*, is the birth-place of meaning, an unfinished process, texture, gravitation, metamorphosis, receptacle, opaque to itself[191]. In this context, the aesthetic becomes the proper field for the interrelatedness of acting and receiving, understanding and valuing, rationality and sensuousness.

> *The* ***Weltlichkeit*** *{wordliness} of the spirits is assured, certainly not by the roots they push into cartesian space, but into the aesthetic world. The aesthetic world to be described as space of transcendence, space of incompatibilities, of coming out, of opening up, and not as objective-immanent space.*[192]

To reflect on the environment as experienced forces us to seek an embodied subject beyond the transcendental ego. For environments are both unfinished and structured in multiple ways, so that one area has room for several different, separate lives. But if the notion of an embedded subject is not supplemented with a discussion of the elements and mechanisms which constitute culture and their relation to individual experience, it remains as vacuous as the transcendental ego. I shall discuss the elements of the built environments in chapter four, and at this point only make some introductory reflections, also in order to conclude what I have said until now.

To approach an environment and reflect on it in real-life situations is typically to take the stance of an inhabitant, to reflect on what it would be like to live in a place like this. There is an other-directedness of such reflection even when the object is our home area, because of the shared and public character of the environment, which also safeguards understanding from idiosyncracies. However, the character of an urban or rural environment is dependent on what the perceiver knows about the place, its inhabitants and objects, but also of her life experience in general. The cultural situation or background of the visitor may or may not find a foothold in the place, which may be either different and yet familiar, or strange. For each environment, there are several perspectives that fit but there are also observers who lack any competence of inhabiting that particular kind of environment.[193]

If the environment is one which we recognize as belonging to us or representing us, as persons or as a community, the experience is not just of our 'surroundings'. Such an environment is constitutive of what we are as persons and citizens and symptomatic of our society and culture, of how people and nature are handled and of how common affairs are managed. The built environment demonstrates, performs and stages relations of nature and culture, biosphere and technosphere, and tells us what we are or what we participate in as citizens and members of a species, even when it is not what we would like to be.

Further, particularly for the inhabitant the present is always the primary context of the environment, however overtly historical it may be. But the present cannot be separated from memories and expectations, which are part of it. The primacy of the present - that the habitat is maintained from and in a temporal and spatial here - is parallel to a view of culture according to which present life, actions, statements and values are decisive for the survival of a heritage. Neither a culture nor a habitat should primarily be understood as bodies of objects, whether material or immaterial. This also means that in situating myself or in accepting my situation I choose my references and participate in the maintenance and creation of patterns of life, which are culture, in the sense of cultivation, and nature, in the sense of life.

In principle, there is an ethical challenge involved in the habitat, understood as a shared responsibility. But especially today, it might be difficult for an individual to get a grip on one's share. The problem is not primarily rooted in the outward appearance of buildings - which can be alienating - but in a kind of planning where social and public life is neglected or insufficiently addressed. The consequences range from the disappearance of local shops to solutions which encourage a privatized relation to urban space. The driver who buys his food in the supermarket has fewer possibilities to establish personal relations to his physical and social environment than the person who on daily walks passes small shops and restaurants with individual flavours, smells, customers and proprietors[194] . Clearly there is nothing alienating about urban metropolitan experience as such. Richard Sennett argues that the view of the metropolis as dominated by strangeness and alienation between people arises in the second half of the nineteenth century, against a background of rapid changes and rootlessness, but also what he calls the "fall of public man"[195] . The feeling of insecurity among other people whom one does not know is thus not a necessary consequence of a mixed urban environment with many newcomers, but is in part rooted in the idea that one should seek the truth about oneself by looking into oneself, rather than in relations with others.

Although constant changes in the environment can be interesting, they can also be frightening if the tempo is high and the result an environment which is unrecognizable and shows no signs of temporal continuity. This kind of alienation may be characteristic of our century. The problem is not even primarily that our personal, particular memories are obliterated, but that memory in general is denied by construction. In such cases, the biggest problem is not that I do not know my coinhabitants or that the whole environment is unfamiliar to me, but that no human individual, no embodied self fits in since all human bodies are too small, too fragile, too much alive to fit in. Some built environments deny, for example, the possibility of getting from one place to another by foot, and thereby they deny the natural competence of the human body.

In principle, there are different modes of experiencing an environment and different kinds of environmental behaviour. These influence what the environment is to us: its dominant character, scale, depth and multiplicity. A rich environment affords various possibilities. One can walk or bicycle, use public transportation, taxis or a private car; one can sit in parks, in cafés or hang out from one's window; stand in the doorway; talk at the street corners. These and other modes of being there give different viewpoints on the city and a potential for certain kinds of aesthetic or social experiences. These become part of our selfunderstanding, as social beings, and of our understanding of the area. They also constitute styles of being, habits, patterns of behaviour and thinking. Being a walker is different from being a driver: I look at those who pass me in their cars.

Usually, the subject who moves through the city is not completely present to it; as the city is only partly accessible, he is attentive only to some degree. Rather than by varying degrees of attention the perceiver's state is characterized by selective attention alternating with inattention. One is going somewhere, with a goal in mind, but with a certain openness to the surroundings. The situation is framed but not ultimately defined. One chooses roles, routes and situations with something in mind, but also in order to be distracted or to give oneself the chance to change in some direction - implicitly aware that change is not a matter of decision or will alone.

Distraction and anonymity are not negative aspects of the environment. The bad anonymity which comes with indifference for our neighbours is not caused by insufficient knowledge about their history or hobbies but is, rather, caused by a lack of common practices or opportunities for harmless politeness between strangers. To exchange a few words and then pass on is a type of urban politeness which allows for anonymity and thus leaves space for individuality, for leading a life that is what it is and is mine - not shared in each aspect with everybody else.

Finally, I shall comment upon two related points, which have been explicitly and implicitly defended in this chapter. One is that the subject must not be understood as a spectator who observes the environment from outside, but as an agent immersed in and part of it. The other is that the human subject must not be seen as opposed to or strange to nature, for as bodies and persons we are natural as well as cultural beings.

One alternative to immersion is to understand the experience of the environment according to a model of inference, where interpretation and judgement are made by applying information about the environment on it[196]. If such a model may be accurate for constructing ideal or "correct" aesthetic appreciation, it is not very elucidating for understanding the habitat, for it overlooks the participation of the subject in the environment and the latter's multiplicity or plurality. Further, if it is objected that the model is developed with a view to aesthetic appreciation rather than to everyday experience, it must be noted that this distinction itself is questionable. What remains of environment if the experiencer is requested to stand back in order to perceive correctly?

Because of the multiplicity - which is another face of transcendence and opacity - of any environment, a comprehensive understanding is unfeasible. Even more, it is undesirable, for it would falsely totalize, oppress and restrict the life that actually goes on. Understanding an environment is, as understanding a person, an unfinished process, and to fully understand must not and should perhaps not be the aim. For this reason it is also dubious to compare a city to a work of art, for it suggests a self-enclosed whole, an entity where all parts are related meaningfully to each other and to the whole. Even in a natural environment, where all elements may in some sense be interrelated, although without a plan, the attempt to interpret what the environment is as such or for itself is dubious. An environment is never for itself.

On the second point, we should note that the human subject is not just a conscious and active agent, but also a passive, sensitive animal. Also for this reason, nature should not be absent from discussions of any human environment. Nature is already in us, so that wherever we are, "non-intentional phenomena" are also present[197]. Therefore the fruitful interpretation of disinterestedness is one that, following Levinas, situates it not with a detached mind but with a distracted, embodied being, open to the environment, unassertive, weak. This is not to say that our interests, the passions and desires that drive us, our projects and goals, would be any less part of 'nature' (an ambiguous term). What we want depends on emotions and knowledge, on what we have, but also on what we lack and miss; on our weakness as much as on our strength. As nature works through our bodies, it establishes an existential, general human condition, which may be accepted or taken as a challenge. How we manifest ourselves in the environment is related to how we conceive of ourselves in the larger and ultimate context of finitude.

The environment requests openness, attention, a 'hermeneutic' imagination from its inhabitants[198]. The transience of urban and of all worldly experience remains, surroundings and companions are constantly transformed and so are we, although as centres of our world we may think of ourselves as stable. But transience can be a source of both sadness and joy, related as it is to decay and vitality. Instability does not mean that our existence is without foundation, only that it is founded in concrete and changing situations.

Notes

[1] Levinas 1987, 85.

[2] Compare the German *Erfahrung* and *Erlebnis*, the Swedish *erfarenhet* and *upplevelse*, or the Finnish *kokemus* and *elämys*.

[3] Merleau-Ponty 1992/1945, 413.

[4] Hottois 1988, esp. 160, 169.

[5] See Murdoch 1989/1970, 1-45, for a critique of traditional philosophy of mind. Compare also Sartwell 1996.

[6] This movement is the basic theme in *Le visible et l'invisible*, Merleau-Ponty 1991/1964.

[7] For examples of Merleau-Ponty's ongoing discussions with earlier philosophers, not against them, see Merleau-Ponty 1995/1960.

[8] Merleau-Ponty 1996/1946, 93, 102.

[9] For this use of the term practicable, see Lingis 1996, 13.

[10] Hegel's *Phänomenologie des Geistes* was published in 1807; Heidegger's *Sein und Zeit* in 1927 (Heidegger 1949/1927), Sartre's *L'Etre et le Néant* in 1943. Husserl's later thinking, *Idéen* (1913) and particularly *Die Krisis der europäischen Wissenschaften* (1936; Husserl 1997/1970), where he discusses the ego as concrete and transcendental, is particularly important for Merleau-Ponty. Sartre and Merleau-Ponty knew each other already as students in *École Normale Supérieure* and later founded *Les Temps Modernes* together. They shared an interest in many problems but their views also differ in important respects, so that the dialogue, at least for Merleau-Ponty, offers opportunities to specify what he does not agree with at the same time as he understands certain areas more fully.

[11] Dillon 1988, 73.

[12] Compare Dillon 1988, 222. I am referring to *Le primat de la perception*, Merleau-Ponty 1996/1946 and *Le visible et l'invisible*, Merleau-Ponty 1991/1964. Merleau-Ponty's reading of other philosophers takes place as a dialogue, even when he is critical; note in particular his appreciation of Husserl's latest efforts and of Descartes, his

"chosen interlocutor," de Penha Villela-Petit 1988, 92. On his relation to Husserl, see also Heinämaa 1996.

[13] Merleau-Ponty 1990/1942.

[14] Note that the title of Merleau-Ponty's second book is not just 'of perceptions' but 'of perception', the process. In French, the relevant distinction is between *la perception* (the process) and *une perception* (the result: a perception); compare Monika M. Langer 1989, 158. Susanne K. Langer's view of perception, which also emphasizes its processual and interactive character, is close to Merleau-Ponty's, Langer 1964.

[15] Merleau-Ponty 1992/1945, 467.

[16] Merleau-Ponty 1992/1945, 343-344 and 1991/1964, 17-19, 48-49, 121, 210-211. Alfred Schutz notes that in the natural attitude there is a suspension of doubt in the existence of "the outer world and its objects", Schutz 1982/1962, 229.

[17] Merleau-Ponty 1992/1945, 180.

[18] Merleau-Ponty 1992/1945, 439, compare 396.

[19] Merleau-Ponty 1992/1945, 377-385. Compare Greimas and Courtés 1979, 250, for a similar definition of 'the natural world' (*le monde naturel*).

[20] Merleau-Ponty 1991/1964, 72.

[21] Dillon 1988, 79. On the same page, Dillon notes that Merleau-Ponty's 'world' is close to "what others have called God or *Geist* or Being, and it is as close to the absolute as he ever ventures". As compared to Heidegger's analysis of ways to understand 'world', Merleau-Ponty seems to combine the ontic and the preontological meaning of the term; Heidegger 1949/1927, 64-65 par. 14. Husserl emphasizes that the world is not only a totality, but also a unity, "a *whole* (even though it is infinite)" with a certain style of appearing; Husserl 1997/1970, 31, compare 23, 35, 320. Alphonso Lingis develops the idea of the world as a nexus of sensible "levels" characterized by their proper styles; Lingis 1996, 33-34.

[22] Merleau-Ponty 1992/1945, 351.

[23] When Merleau-Ponty refers to the world in a specified, partial sense, this is clear from the context or through the use of an attribute. I follow this usage: *the* world is the totality, *a* world is restricted. Compare Mikel Dufrenne's philosophy of art, where 'world' refers to an individual world, which is expressed before it is represented, and which differs from the world as totality, Dufrenne 1992/1953, 221-257, 645-656; see also Dufrenne 1959, 227-255 and 1981, 145-159.

[24] Dillon 1988, 92, 93.

[25] This was also Husserl's view; see Husserl 1997/1970, 127-129, or, for a fuller discussion, "The Vienna lecture", 269-299; compare the notion of personal knowledge in Polanyi 1958.

[26] This comes out better in French: *vers* - towards - and *version*.

[27] Merleau-Ponty 1992/1945, 248; see also 1991/1964, 152-153, 182-184.

[28] Merleau-Ponty 1992/1945, 53.

[29] This can be compared to Searle's "Background theory", Searle 1992, 175-196.

[30] Merleau-Ponty 1992/1945, 490, compare 114-172 (*La spatialité du corps propre et la motricité*).

[31] Merleau-Ponty 1992/1945, 491, quoted from Husserl, *Formale und transzendentale Logik*, 257.

[32] Dillon 1988, 55-56.

[33] This is confirmed by recent research in cognitive science. See, for example, Tiitinen 1994.

[34] Merleau-Ponty 1992/1945, 46.

[35] Merleau-Ponty 1992/1945, 151.

[36] Levinas 1987, 85.

[37] Merleau-Ponty 1992/1945, 491.

[38] Merleau-Ponty 1992/1945, 491, compare 286.

[39] See Merleau-Ponty 1993/1964; for an application outside perception in the narrow sense see also Merleau-Ponty 1996/1946, 93, 102 and 1995/1960.

[40] Compare Casey 1993, 43-70.

[41] Compare Searle: "intentional notions are inherently normative", Searle 1992, 51.

[42] Dufrenne 1992/1953, 197, 291, 409 and 1959, 136. Dufrenne borrows this notion from Gabriel Marcel.

[43] Merleau-Ponty 1992/1945, 344; see also 345-397.

[44] Polanyi 1958, 98.

[45] Merleau-Ponty 1992/1945, 175; compare 106, where he describes the body as "with me" or "always presupposed" in the experience of space. These passages indicate that the centre of attention is not necessarily in, although it is with the body.

[46] Merleau-Ponty 1991/1964, 230-233 and 1995. Compare also Berleant 1997, 97-111.

[47] See Durrant 1993, Nussbaum and Rorty 1995. In Finnish *henki* means life and breath, but is also an archaic word for person (the modern word is *henkilö*).

[48] For an interesting discussion of perception and "carnal light" in Merleau-Ponty, see Vasseleu 1998, 21-72.

[49] On sedimentation, see Merleau-Ponty 1992/1945, 151 and Johnson 1989, 20-30.

[50] Merleau-Ponty 1992/1945, 158, compare 184.

[51] Kelkel 1988, 30-31, 37. The relevant passage is in Merleau-Ponty 1992/1945, 249-250. But one could argue with Ladelle McWhorter that "the narrow option of will versus surrender is one of the power configurations of current thinking that must be allowed to dissipate", McWhorter 1992a, 3.

[52] Merleau-Ponty 1991/1964, 83.

[53] Merleau-Ponty 1992/1945, 116.

[54] Murdoch 1989/1970, 25-26, 31-33.

[55] Compare Schutz 1982/1962.

[56] Compare Sara Heinämaa's discussion on gender as style, 1996, 132-173.

[57] Merleau-Ponty 1992/1945, 414.

[58] Hottois 1988, 169-171.

[59] Merleau-Ponty 1996-1946, 67-68, compare 85: "I did not pretend to say that culture consists in perceiving." Compare Schutz 1982/1962, 101, 115, on phenomenology as a beginning.

[60] Schutz 1982/1962, 208-209.

[61] Compare Natanson 1982/1962, xlvi.

[62] Schutz 1982/1962, 224.

[63] Gilbert Ryle, *The Concept of Mind* 1949 and Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophische Untersuchungen* 1953.

[64] Galen A. Johnson points out that Merleau-Ponty throughout his life had an active interest in sciences related to human and animal life and behaviour, Johnson 1989, 52.

[65] Heidegger 1949/1927, 68-69 (par. 15).

[66] Compare Mulhall 1996, 48.

[67] Lingis 1996, 13.

[68] Lingis 1996, 22, 26.

[69] In Heidegger, we attend to the hammer itself only when it becomes problematic in some way; Heidegger 1949/1927, 73 (par. 16).

[70] Heidegger 1949/1927, 117-130 (par. 26 and 27). Hubert L. Dreyfus rightly points out that *das Man* should be translated as 'one' rather than 'they', 'we' or 'anyone'; Dreyfus 1994/1991, 151-152 and 141-162.

[71] Compare Monika M. Langer 1989, 151.

[72] The term 'consociate' is used by Schutz, i.e. 1982/1962, 16-17.

[73] Osborne 1977a, 41-44. Monroe C. Beardsley points out that this "seems to explain the absence of taste-symphonies and smell-sonatas," Beardsley 1981, 99.

[74] Kant distinguishes between the pleasurable and the beautiful on the basis that only the latter engages our rational capacities, Kant 1990/1790, 49-50, 59-60 (par. 7, 11). Already for Aquinas, form was the reason why only sight and hearing are relevant for

the experience of beauty; Campbell 1996, 170-171. See also Sparshott 1963, 144-145.

[75] "In India", observes Jerome Stolnitz "'lower-sense' stimuli serve as religious and ethical symbols"; Stolnitz 1960, 226. For similar reflections on food, see Korsmeyer, forthcoming.

[76] Peirce 1932, 143-144.

[77] Searle 1992, 85.

[78] Toulmin 1992/1990, 109; compare 105-117.

[79] Crary 1990, 60, 62; for two different perspectives on the interdependence of vision and touch in actual, embodied perception, see Gibson 1966, 104, 200, or Vasseleu 1998.

[80] Arendt 1958, 290.

[81] Searle 1992, 16-17, *passim*; compare the discussion in Cascardi 1992, 34-40.

[82] Merleau-Ponty 1995, 289.

[83] Polanyi 1958, 297.

[84] That is, if one considers Merleau-Ponty's work as a whole. Compare Peillon 1994, 191-202.

[85] Gibson 1966, 23; compare, on 'affordances' below, note 91.

[86] However, animals probably live more intensely and immanently in a perceived world than humans do, since they apparently lack the possibilities for transcendence provided by language and abstract thinking.

[87] Campbell 1996, 174.

[88] Compare Merleau-Ponty's observations on how a city "for those who participate in its history, is full of meaning - or a face, but for those who do not participate, it is meaningless", Merleau-Ponty 1995, 290.

[89] Osborne 1977a, 46. His whole discussion of smells in relation to aesthetics is illuminating.

[90] Böhme 1995, 96, 142.

[91] Gibson 1966, 285; see also Cataldi 1993, 33-34.

[92] Gehl 1987/1980, 164.

[93] With 'praktognosis,' Lingis refers to perception as a project of identification, intent on objectives and manipulation; Lingis 1996, 37, 42.

[94] Compare Dillon 1988, 164.

[95] Polanyi 1958, 55.

[96] Searle 1992, 138-139.

[97] This is less strange than it sounds: I believe most skilled carpenters have these kinds of experiences locked in somewhere in the cellars of their memory.

[98] Parland 1971.

[99] Gibson 1966, 32-38.

[100] Compare Searle 1992, 152-173 and, for a similar conception of the relation between conscious and unconscious, Kristeva 1985/1974, 17-100.

[101] Compare Dillon 1988, 168, also 161.

[102] Compare Heidegger 1949/1927, 105-106 and 1954, 157-158.

[103] Gabriel Josipovici points to this as an important difference between film and real life; Josipovici 1996, 7.

[104] Osborne 1977a, 43.

[105] Compare Peillon 1994, 194-202.

[106] Merleau-Ponty 1991/1964, 289.

[107] Levinas 1993/1963, 20-21.

[108] Compare, in chapter five, first section, the discussion of 'the real'.

[109] Levinas 1993/1963, 92.

[110] Levinas 1993/1963, 99, also 93-105.

[111] Levinas 1993/1963, 100; compare Julia Kristeva's discussion of the carcass and the abject in *Pouvoirs de l'horreur*, Kristeva 1983/1980, 11-12.

[112] Levinas 1993/1963, 104.

[113] Levinas 1994/1961, 159-160.

[114] Levinas 1994/1961, 117-118.

[115] Levinas 1996/1978, 56.

[116] Merleau-Ponty 1992/1945, 184.

[117] Merleau-Ponty 1992/1945, 199, 180; see also 180-202; particularly the notes on Freud (185, 195) are illuminating for understanding Merleau-Ponty's idea of sexuality. In "L'homme et l'adversité" he acknowledges the mature Freud as a forerunner of "the modern notion of the lived body" (*le corps vécu*) and states that "the sexual is our way (since we are flesh, our carnal way) of living our relationships with others," Merleau-Ponty 1996/1960 284-308: 288, 292.

[118] An expression used by Guy Sircello, who distinguishes between the sexual and the erotic, Sircello 1989, 205, 209.

[119] Merleau-Ponty 1992/1945, 191-193.

[120] Compare Casey 1993, 47-50, and Arnheim 1977, 32-66.

[121] Greimas and Fontanille 1991, 12-13, 54, 106.

[122] Mazis 1993, 83, 84.

[123] I give a fuller treatment to place in chapters three, third section, and five, second section.

[124] Mazis 1993, 89. The quotation includes a reference to Merleau-Ponty 1992/1945, 24 (indicated with an asterisk).

[125] Merleau-Ponty 1992/1945, 196.

[126] Mazis 1993, 220. There is an affinity between affectivity and the phoric, as described by Greimas and Fontanille (1991, 18-19), but they describe this level as one of subjective mastery, which, to my mind, manifests a confusion of the practicable and the impracticable stance.

[127] Merleau-Ponty 1991/1964, 183.

[128] Merleau-Ponty 1991/1964, 184.

[129] Merleau-Ponty 1992/1945, 192.

[130] Husserl uses 'anonymous' to point to what is in experience without being thematic. He does not especially apply the notion to an affective realm, but observes that philosophy has largely left the realm of the subjective "to its 'anonymity'"; Husserl 1997/1970, 109, 111-114.

[131] Levinas 1996/1978, 56.

[132] Merleau-Ponty 1991/1964, 183-184.

[133] Compare, on how the indefinite is grasped in work, without reference to the idea of infinity, Levinas 1994/1961, 171.

[134] Aristotle, *De anima*, Book II, ch. 11, 422b 17, in Durrant 1993, 44.

[135] On "carnal light" in Merleau-Ponty, see Vasseleu 1998, 21-72.

[136] Merleau-Ponty 1996/1960, 28.

[137] This example is used by Gilbert Ryle; Ryle 1967/1954, 71.

[138] Thus it is unnecessary to assume, as Mikel Dufrenne does, the existence of 'affective a prioris,' which would be constitutive of both subject and world and known "before every experience", Dufrenne 1992/1953, 570, also Dufrenne 1959 and 1981.

[139] Dufrenne 1963, esp. 166-181; compare Howarth 1995.

[140] Mazis 1993, 240 (where the passage is in italics).

[141] Mazis 1993, 169; compare, for a similar argument, Andersson 1994/1992.

[142] On remembering and forgetting, compare Johnson 1989, 67-92.

[143] Mazis 1993, 136.

[144] Mazis 1993, 102.

[145] Greimas and Fontanille 1991, 53, 285-6.

[146] Dreyfus 1994/1991, 129.

[147] Here I disagree with Casey 1993, 4-21, 100-105, who simply understands space as objective and place as subjective. This distinction misses the anonymous dimension of subjective experience which becomes important in 'felt space', a notion which cannot be replaced by any version of 'place'.

[148] Mazis 1993, 92.

[149] In both cases, nature is understood as the opposite of what is intended or consciously made by humans. Compare Arendt 1958, 150.

[150] Greimas, 1987, 40. I continue the discussion of revelatory experiences in chapter two second section, subsection three.

[151] Greimas 1987, 24. I discuss disinterestedness in relation to the aesthetic attitude in chapter two second section, subsection two.

[152] *Du* has earlier been translated as Thou, but Walter Kaufmann translates it as You; Buber 1983/1970. While much speaks for this more everyday translation I shall use Thou, which accentuates, among other things, the singularity of the other.

[153] Buber 1983/1923, 18. My translation differs somewhat from Walter Kaufmann's in Buber 1983/1970, 62.

[154] Buber 1983/1923, 39, 42.

[155] Buber 1983/1923, 13-14.

[156] Compare Buber 1990.

[157] In a discussion of justice, Levinas notes that "[t]he interlocutor with whom reciprocity is inaugurated is not the empirical individual with his individual history"; Levinas 1987, 44.

[158] This makes it difficult, if not impossible to create a systematic application of Levinas' ethics. For reflections on the connections between his ethics and politics, see Critchley 1992, 219-236 and Bauman 1993.

[159] Levinas 1993/1991, 244.

[160] Levinas 1993/1963, compare 1994/1961, 291, where voluptuousness is described as likewise pure, since it does not lead to a concept. Generally, Levinas is very clear in his rejection of notions that suggest contentment or totality, such as 'experience' or 'phenomenon', although he grants that the phenomenological method "affirms the primacy, the principality of the nonformal", Levinas 1987, 177.

[161] Levinas 1993/1963, 156.

[162] Levinas 1994/1961, 288.

[163] Levinas 1994/1961, 146.

[164] Levinas 1996/1978, 30.

[165] Levinas 1996/1978, 90-96; compare 169 on the individual as 'atomic' and indivisible.

[166] Levinas 1992/1986, 88, 106, 150; compare Levinas 1987, 53-59, 171.

[167] Levinas 1987, 29.

[168] Levinas 1987, 96.

[169] Levinas 1994/1961, 211.

[170] Levinas 1994/1961, 32-39.

[171] Josipovici 1996, 59.

[172] Levinas 1987, 119.

[173] Levinas 1996/1978, 145.

[174] Levinas 1996/1978, 90.

[175] Levinas 1996/1978, 85-85. The capitals in Saying and Said conform with his spelling. Earlier, Levinas uses the notion of disinterestedness in its established meaning to describe play, an activity where there is no finality; Levinas 1994/1961, 141.

[176] Levinas 1996/1978, 78-86.

[177] Levinas 1987, 43.

[178] Levinas 1996/1978, 220-222, compare Levinas 1987, 171: "One can call this plot of infinity, where I make myself the author of what I understand, *inspiration*. It constitutes, prior to the unity of apperception, the very psyche in the soul."

[179] Levinas 1987, 148-9.

[180] Levinas 1987, 73, 82, 83.

[181] Levinas 1994/1961, 340-343 and 1996/1978, 269-284.

[182] Levinas 1987, 112

[183] Levinas criticizes Heidegger for his objectifying understanding of the human being and culture, as if these could be maintained trough neutral Being or mere artefacts. Without the interruption of the other, says Levinas, existence remains mere projection; Levinas 1994/1961, 36-38, 332-3 and 1996/1978, 279-280.

[184] Schutz 1982/1962

[185] Compare, on change, chapter three, fourth section.

[186] See chapter four.

[187] Mazis 1993, 264

[188] Compare, on *genius loci*, chapter five, third section, below.

[189] Compare Stanford Anderson's warning against deterministic thinking; Anderson 1991a/1986, 1, 7.

[190] Merleau-Ponty 1991/1964, 83.

[191] Merleau-Ponty 1991/1964, 192-193, 200, 203.

[192] Merleau-Ponty 1991/1964, 269-270. The aesthetic should here be understood primarily against Kant's first Critique and Husserl, not as similar to the philosophy of art and beauty.

[193] Compare Finn Werne's discussion of invisible, that is, internalized architecture; Werne 1987, 141-204.

[194] Compare Sennett 1990, 150-168.

[195] Sennett 1993/1977, see, in particular, 3-27, 123-255, 123-255.

[196] This model is a risk with the otherwise valuable work of Allen Carlson, Marcia Muelder Eaton or Yrjö Sepänmaa; compare Carlson 1979, 1981, 1993a and 1997, Sepänmaa 1993.

[197] Georg Henrik von Wright uses this expression to describe nature; von Wright 1993, 167.

[198] As discussed by Richard Kearney, such imagination is importantly forwardlooking and ethical in scope; Kearney 1995, see, in particular part two, 66-106. Compare Scott Lash's discussion of a hemeneutic, social reflexivity in Lash 1994; also Hampshire 1989.

Chapter two

AESTHETIC EXPERIENCE AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Aesthetics is born as a discourse of the body.[1]

And we recall that aesthetics began as an epistemological discipline.[2]

The reason why aesthetics was largely absent from the previous chapter is its tendency to push sensuousness to the margins. The real and the sensual have been problems for aesthetic thinking, which has often aimed at controlling or marginalizing these issues, as if sense qualities were valuable only in spite of sensuality[3]. In the introduction, I noted that while Kant places a great emphasis on the singularity of the object of aesthetic judgment, this is not so for the subject, whom he sees as a transcendental subject, universal man. The relations and connections of a particular subject to her social and natural environment, her status as a historical person, are thus ignored.

But there is an early aesthetician, contemporary with and greatly influenced by Kant, who notes that human existence is embodied. This is Friedrich Schiller, poet and thinker, who in repeating Kant's scheme transforms his terminology and therefore the whole picture[4]. Schiller does not describe the constituents of a human being in terms of mental capacities, but in terms of drives (*Triebe*). If Kantian reason and understanding refer abstractly to the stance of an autonomous subject towards reality, the sensuous drive or drive towards reality (*sinnlicher Trieb*, *Stofftrieb*), the form-drive (*Formtrieb*) and the play-drive (*Spieltrieb*) are unthinkable without embodiment. Schiller's subject is in the world and of the world. With the inclusion of the body there is at least a possibility to take into account the subject's particular and individual features, including her historical situation. An embodied and worldly subject cannot rise above her situation in the way a transcendental subject can, and in this respect, the political perspectives in Schiller's thinking, idealistic as they are, are symptomatic and interesting[5].

The transcendental and the embodied subject are based on different ways of understanding human existence. The choice is not just of theoretical interest, for it has consequences for how we proceed, in what directions, and here there is a mutual dependence between thinking and its tools. The choice is also about understanding and elaborating the perspectives and promises opened up by the aesthetic point of view. In addition, if taken seriously, aesthetics cannot be treated simply as an interesting strand of thinking, independent of our understanding of human existence generally. This is why the discussion of aesthetics was preceded by a discussion of environmental experience in general. If the aesthetic cannot find a place in the larger context, illuminating and complementing other perspectives, there is scarcely much use for the notion in contemporary thinking. By this, I do not mean to say that one should find an essentialist definition. There are deterrent examples.

For example, there is a tradition of understanding the aesthetic negatively and in contrast to the everyday, which is parallel to how art has been institutionalized. If the aesthetic for Kant and Schiller had a mediating role in human life, this tradition produces the opposite result: the aesthetic becomes reified as a separate moment, untouched by the humdrum and by vital concerns. It is indeed all but certain that the differentiation of the aesthetic, although a deeply rooted strategy, is a fruitful approach to aesthetic matters. A preoccupation with *differentia specifica* easily narrows our understanding. This is regrettable, since the fruitfulness of the aesthetic is connected to its mediating role in bringing together rational and sensuous, reason and imagination, thus "bridging the gaps" of experience[6]. If the aesthetic is best understood as a mediating notion, this might also explain the problems of articulating a neat definition.

Due to the fact that aesthetics primarily developed as a philosophy of art, there are additional problems in environmental aesthetics. To understand the aesthetic as separate from everyday existence is particularly difficult when the objects of aesthetic appreciation, mostly, are not predefined, discrete or enframed[7]. On the other hand, when the object is culturally enframed, like canonical landscapes or landscape types, appreciation easily becomes a specialized and detached activity. If one wants to differentiate the aesthetic from the nonaesthetic, criteria must be sought elsewhere, for example in experience. But it could also be argued that it is unnecessary, perhaps even harmful, to separate aesthetic experience from general environmental experience. Aesthetic and nonaesthetic components are not separate; the distinction exists only upon reflection and is not very clear[8].

The insistence and plurality of aesthetic thinking suggests that it deals with valuable dimensions of human life that receive little attention outside aesthetics. So it is also, and particularly, with the environment. The aesthetic perspective offers a possibility to arrive at a fuller understanding of human existence. It singles out dimensions and aspects which in other cultures have been dealt with in other contexts, but this only points to their givenness in human life[9]. Although the notion of the aesthetic is a construction, the experiences it refers to are not just that. This is proved by their resistance to conceptual control and one-sided definitions. The birth of insights in aesthetic thinking has been painful, and it is all the more admirable for this. They were born against the odds, with aesthetics squeezed into a philosophical tradition and a culture that in the main took only tangible reality seriously and valued narrowly conceived, objectivist rationality.

In this chapter, I shall first look critically and with appreciation at some suggestions for the specificity of aesthetic experience: unity, disinterestedness, revelation. I have singled out ideas that I found representative and that contain - sometimes hide - valuable insights. The idea that aesthetic experience is unified is developed in pragmatism and in phenomenologically inspired aesthetics. This perspective (re)connects the aesthetic to experience at large. However, in the context of environmental aesthetics, unity is not unproblematic even if its basis is in a quality or feeling where unified structure is the consequence. Another way of defining aesthetic experience is to look for a specific attitude or form of attention: here is the second criterion, disinterestedness. It does not separate aesthetic from ethical or religious experience, which is not as such a problem, for why should aesthetic experience be different from these in every respect? Thirsly, the borderline problems of aesthetic experience - how it differs from the everyday - may be avoided by concentrating on intense, revelatory or 'peak' experiences of art or beauty. Experiences of sudden insight, revelation, changes in the individual's perception of the world undeniably exist, and they have been singled out as aesthetic experiences. I shall ask whether a similar revelatory element can be present also in weaker instances of experiencing aesthetically.

Undeniably, there is a risk with enlarging the notion of the aesthetic, for it might become too extensive to be a useful tool for thinking. My intuition is, however, that this depends on the role we give to situatedness and sensuousness. If the concrete and sensuous are necessary ingredients of aesthetic experience, the notion defends a kind of experience which finds no other name or place. The aesthetic, then, has a position to defend in the name of the quality of life. In the second section of this chapter, I approach the aesthetic with the aim of describing rather than defining it. Four features are singled out as part of aesthetic experience: sensuousness, sensitivity, imagination and evaluation. These are not separate, but overlapping descriptive perspectives. While this discussion is still abstract, it is synthetic rather than analytic. The idea is to open the notion of the aesthetic and make it better suited for discussions of environmental experience.

If aesthetic experience is mediating and synthetic, substance and content, worldly matters, should not be exiled from the proper domain of the aesthetic. Everyday experience offers material and vital challenges for aesthetic experience, from without and from within[10]. The phenomena which demand aesthetic judgment, in art or in our everyday environments, are, as Merleau-Ponty put it, "made of the debris of the real"[11]. Whatever else it is, aesthetic experience is substantial: connected not only to the hows but also to the whats of experience. I conclude the chapter with the theme of response - which I see as a key feature of aesthetic experience, if it is more than trivial. The aesthetic is in this final section connected to phenomenological perspectives that were taken up in the previous chapter, and it is described as an essentially axiological perspective.

Defining the aesthetic

Unity

There might be a tendency towards objectification behind the attempts to delimit and separate aesthetic from other kinds of experience[12]. But, on the other hand, a structural or formal description of aesthetic experience does

not imply a refutation of the relevance of the substance and quality of experience. As shall be seen, in the final instance descriptions of aesthetic experience as unified often rely on feeling. Unity, then, refers primarily to the relatedness of percepts and affects, inner and outer, not to the delimitation of the experience. Also, to point to structural features gives room for varied substance and does not of necessity deny the relevance of worldly material to the aesthetic.

One of the best-known attempts to address aesthetics and define art through experience is John Dewey's *Art as Experience*. Dewey moves away from institutionalized and reified conceptions of art towards a view where actual experience constitutes the core of art. I shall not discuss his ideas at length, only concentrate on two themes: the structural description of aesthetic experience and the way in which, inside this structure, experience is described as free flow. Dewey emphasizes the continuity between ordinary experience and aesthetic experience[13], but he also points out a difference in the structure of experience. Ordinary experience, or experiencing, is undifferentiated: it has neither beginning nor end, and is not clearly focused on anything in particular. Aesthetic experience is, on the contrary, *an* experience, with beginning and end, where "the material experienced runs its course to fulfillment"[14]. Attention is focused, and the experience is more intense than ordinary experience.

While aesthetic experience is certainly an experience of something, Dewey also points out that the experiencing itself is, in addition to what is experienced, foregrounded. It is important to note the processual and somatic character of aesthetic experience[15], a trait it has in common with ordinary experiencing, from which it springs. The subject is not only a platform of experience, a nodal point of a free play of mental capacities, but is also engaged in a corporeal and sensuous way. In addition, this engagement is not merely or always pleasant; it "involves reconstruction which may be painful"[16]. In Dewey's account aesthetic experience does not, then, leave everything as it is. "Doing" and "undergoing", its intertwined characteristics, form a dynamic which requires a creative effort from the experiencer: there is always the element of making[17]. Further, 'painful' at least suggests that the experience might require courage, that the *status quo* of what I am might be disturbed and changed, perhaps in unexpected ways.

The structural distinctiveness of aesthetic experience, or art as experience, can in Dewey's account be seen as what grants it the other feature I want to pick out, namely its nondistinctive contents. Aesthetic experience cannot be separated from general experiencing on the basis of its objects: it may have to do with anything, provided that it is is vitally felt. As Dewey states in an often quoted passage: "The enemies of the esthetic are neither the practical nor the intellectual. They are the humdrum."[18] Thus if aesthetic experience is open to every dimension of life, the aesthetic is, as a possibility, inherent in any situation. And despite his definition of the significant structure of aesthetic experience, Dewey grants that experiences can have an aesthetic, that is, unified emotional, character, although they do not quite fulfil the requirement of *an* experience[19]. The aesthetic is therefore characterized by an intensification of normal qualities rather than by qualities of a specific kind[20].

All versions of the idea that aesthetic experience should be unified do not emphasize the precise duration of the experience. In a re-evaluation of his own description of aesthetic experience Monroe C. Beardsley states that the unified character means that "percepts are integrated with affects of different kinds"[21]. On the whole, his understanding of the structure of aesthetic experience is influenced by Dewey[22]. In Beardsley's earlier version of 1958, aesthetic experience is described as an experience where attention is firmly fixed to its object and the experience characterized by unity or coherence, complexity, and intensity. The experience is, in this context, related to aesthetic objects - as *prima facie* experienced works of art - and to aesthetic value, which is described as dependent on the capacity of the object "to produce an aesthetic experience of some magnitude"[23].

In Beardsley's later work, aesthetic experience is described in a more phenomenological way, as a process of interaction between subject or self and the object. "Object directedness" is now the necessary criterion for aesthetic experience, and the object is presented not as a distinctive thing, but as the "phenomenally objective properties (qualities and relations) of a perceptual or intentional field on which attention is fixed"[24]. These properties should be given the lead; the perceiver should refrain from "trying to force the visual field to disgorge the desired or predicted datum"[25]. The four other criteria of aesthetic experience, at least three of which should be present, are also described in a way which focus on the experiencer. These are felt freedom, detached affect, active discovery and wholeness. I pick out the last criterion, wholeness, since it gives an opportunity to discuss the affective components of experience as the ground for its unity. I shall take up George Dickie's criticism of Beardsley's theory as an example of philosophical blindfolding, since to my mind the most promising, if also the most demanding, reasons to pursue the discussion of aesthetic experience are to be found in what Dickie denies and criticizes.

Dickie's criticism was first presented in 1965 and rearticulated nine years later after a reply from Beardsley[26]. Its main target is the "contention that aesthetic experience is unified, that is, that there is a special unity of experience"[27]. To Dickie it makes sense to speak of the unity of the work of art, but not of the unity of an experience, which he conceives of as "an effect caused by [the work of art]"[28]. However, one could say that not unity but duality is the main problem in the discussion between Dickie and Beardsley, for as Dickie describes discussions of aesthetic experience they are either about attitude and attention, or they "refer to something (a certain kind of experience) that is produced" by attending to works of art[29]. He ascribes the latter version, which he calls "the causal conception of aesthetic experience", to Beardsley[30]. The reason why Dickie cannot make sense of aesthetic experience is revealed in the word 'causal' and its empiricist implications. This is the core issue in the following critical comments on Dickie.

Since for Beardsley feeling constitutes the unity of experience, Dickie substantiates his criticism of aesthetic experience through a discussion of the role of feeling in the experience of art. He denies that an affective component is necessarily present: one can, for example, approach and enjoy certain abstract paintings without feeling anything:

> *Abstract paintings frequently arouse feelings and emotions, but the kind I now have in mind does not; one finds it very pleasant to look at and to continue to look at such a painting, but no feelings or emotions are produced.*[31]

The notion of feeling is one key to the controversy between Beardsley and Dickie, and it is of decisive importance for the viability of aesthetic reflection on phenomena outside the realm of art, a question I shall return to. Before that, there is reason to take a closer look at how Dickie understands the affective dimension. In experience, he separates "phenomenally subjective" and "phenomenally objective" features. Emotions or affects belong to the first group, and as an example, he mentions "the experience which includes the perception of an ordinary kitchen chair". In the example, the emotions or subjective features of experience are not related to the objective features of the chair. On the other hand, a quiet contemplation of the chair is said to involve practically no subjective features.[32] Later, Dickie discusses the experience of watching the play *Hamlet*. Although it might contain a sequence of emotions, such as "fear, anger, distrust, irritation, pity, indignation, excitement, pity and sadness", it is not clear to Dickie that "this sequence of affects constitute[s] a unity".[33]

In these examples, two fundamental starting points are revealed: the separation of subjective and objective elements of experience, and the identification of feelings which might be called emotion-labels: words used in order to classify and communicate information about what we feel. If the separation of subjective and objective components of experience is mistaken, Dickie's argument against the notion of aesthetic experience fails. The separatist tendency includes the separation of emotions from each other, where they are seen as distinctive entities. But the distinction is produced by the needs of articulation and communication in much the same way as colour terms are produced. Although language or cultural patterns of feeling influence experience, emotions are primarily felt, and "to feel is an activity, not a product."[34] In reality, both colours and affective states are legion, and the latter are more complicated. That Dickie uses the words feeling, affect, and emotion interchangeably is worth reflection[35]. Distinctions can certainly be made in the field of affectivity, whether we think of it as a dimension of experience or study the discourse(s) of feeling. If feeling often refers to unarticulated moods or affective states (I feel depressed), or somatically located sense impressions and impulses (I feel a tickle in my stomach when a certain person comes near), emotions are more conscious and articulated, and often transitive (I can be sad about something, but some persons are generally sad).[36]

Dickie thus rejects experience as a ground for the distinction of what is aesthetic and what is nonaesthetic. "If aesthetic experience is to be distinguished from nonaesthetic experience [...] it will have to be done by determining whether the object from which the experience derives is an aesthetic object or not."[37] Such a view leaves few possibilities for dealing with aesthetic experience outside the realm of art. Dickie is aware of this, and he suggests that we seek "nature-appreciation conventions," comparable to the conventions for appreciating art[38]. However, it can be doubted that there exists a context for experiencing environments - aesthetic or nonaesthetic - that can in a meaningful way be compared to the context provided by such cultural institutions as art[39]. Even more seriously, taken the heterogeneity of the environment there is reason to doubt that such conventions would be desirable[40].

To take art as a starting point does not necessarily make aesthetic reflection irrelevant in a larger, environmental context. This is demonstrated in Michael H. Mitias' circumscriptions of the aesthetic through experience. Like Dickie, Mitias considers unity to be the key question of aesthetic experience, but he understands it in a different way. Although Mitias' theory is about the experience of art, his discussions of feeling as the basic constituent of experience and of aesthetic quality as the principle of aesthetic distinction open it towards non-art experiences.[41]

For Mitias, aesthetic experience is a relational event. The aesthetic comes in between the subject and the object and brings them in touch with each other.[42] Feeling cannot be reduced - as Dickie does - to a subjective component: it is not exclusively inside the experiencer but is a ligament between subject and object, self and world. Mitias also describes the affective component as present in all experience, thus the affective is not clearly separable from cognitive and perceptual processes[43]. The unity and distinguishing feature of aesthetic experience is founded on aesthetic quality, which is felt, but is also "in the object". Feeling triggers the experience and gives it unity, in terms of both structure and quality. Mitias describes the process as starting with the perception of an aspect which arouses an "introductory feeling" of excitement or attraction. In the second stage, "the perceptual field narrows gradually, and the quality which has sparked the aesthetic process becomes the *focal* point of awareness". In the third stage, our sense of time changes so that references to past and future are suspended and the present is "saturated with the introductory feeling".[44]

Mitias' detailed account is unproblematic neither in the environmental context nor in the context of art. He juxtaposes the ordinary and the aesthetic as if there were a given substantial difference between them, for example when he declares that "in assuming or beginning to assume the aesthetic attitude we become oblivious to the world of ordinary experience both perceptually and temporally"[45]. It is not at all clear that there is "a world of ordinary experience" apart from the "aesthetic attitude". Alternatively, aesthetic experience could be seen in terms of an intensification which involves, among other things, a possible restructuring of what was taken for granted.

In the above accounts, the unity of aesthetic experience is due to a quality or feeling which is the basis of a unified structure. This does not give an answer to what environmental aesthetic experience is, but neither does it force us to construe it differently from the experience of art. On the other hand, the question of the characteristics of aesthetic experience is not yet solved. If the affective dimension - which has here been presented as central to the aesthetic - is always present in human experience and if it constitutes a basic relation of self and world, then it is not clear in what sense aesthetic experience marks itself off from experience in general. Is aesthetic experience a kind of its own, or should we conceive of the relation between aesthetic and nonaesthetic as a gradual transition between the more and the less aesthetic? Is there a bias in the notion of *an* experience? The reader may already have detected my sympathies. The next perspective on aesthetic experience, related to attitudes and interests, hopefully clarifies the standpoint and its context.

Disinterestedness

The distinguishing trait of aesthetic experience can be situated in the subject, which is the strategy adopted by those for whom the attitude is decisive in judging whether an experience or situation is aesthetic[46]. The experience, then, does not have to have a definite structure or be separated from the ordinary world or the flow of experiencing. Also, if perception includes an active, projective and a passive, receptive side, one can distinguish between kinds of perceptive attention.

Disinterestedness is a classical and perhaps the single most popular specification of aesthetic attention. In this section, I shall discuss it together with some related ideas, such as the possibility of correct attention in aesthetic environmental experience and the place of desire in aesthetic experience. Disinterestedness is often understood to imply detachment and the bracketing of the real existence of the object, but there is reason to doubt the possibility of an environmental experience which is both detached and emotionally meaningful[47]. In this respect, the idea that our basic, natural relationship to the environment is one of perceptual faith or trust merits attention[48]. Trust is necessary for a perceptual enjoyment where the subject is fully engaged: I cannot doubt that what I enjoy exists[49]. Further, an important part of our enjoyment of the environment comes from a sense of physical and historical materiality and transcendence[50] which is enforced through the possibilities of continued, expanded experience: infinite, because unfinished in a way no single representation could be. It would be curious if such enjoyment had no place in aesthetic experience. I shall argue that it has. Towards the end of this section I shall reflect on an interpretation of disinterestedness where the emphasis is on respect for the object, for the crucial question about disinterestedness is how this notion is understood and used.

Jerome Stolnitz has described disinterestedness as a necessary feature of the aesthetic attitude, which consists of "disinterested and sympathetic attention to and contemplation of any object of awareness whatever, for its own sake alone."[51] The aesthetic attitude, in turn, is a necessary and sufficient condition of aesthetic experience: "'aesthetic experience' is the total experience had while this attitude is being taken."[52] It is clear at the outset that disinterestedness, the *fundamentum divisionis* of the aesthetic, in Stolnitz' account has a moral flavour. "Authentically aesthetic appreciation is neither self-seeking nor self-centered."[53] The subject should neither impose his will nor project his wishes on the object, nor seek to cognitively control it by subsuming it under concepts. The object must be allowed to appear on its own terms. This is one reason why it is indispensable not to look beyond the appearance, for to do that would be to take an interest in the object which would exceed the appreciative situation.

This brings us to the second feature I want to draw attention to in Stolnitz, namely that only the inherent qualities of the object are relevant[54]. The question is, of course, what these are. At first, Stolnitz' earlier version of the theory seems less exclusive. He states that knowledge "is not *aesthetically* relevant unless it interacts with what we see and feel" and adds that it "must be assimilated into the aesthetic experience". However, "[i]n the aesthetic experience, any and every sort of awareness - sensory, perceptual, intellectual, imaginative, emotional - may occur."[55] But in a later article, Stolnitz denies that the painting "Guernica" has anything to do with the city of Guernica[56]. This is puzzling, and I shall address the question later from a phenomenological perspective, but first refer to some criticisms launched from an analytic standpoint.

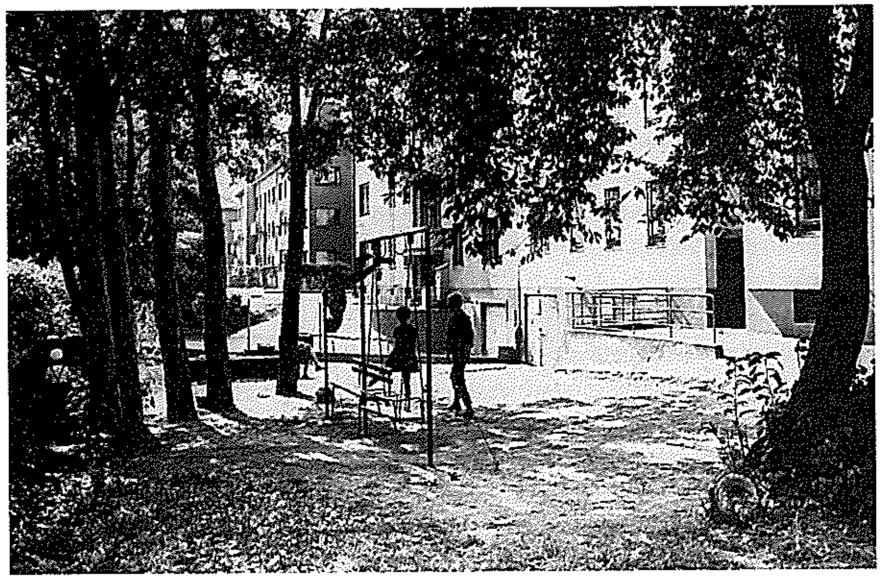
Dickie notes that history and social criticism are indeed part of some works of art[57]. He also denies that a special kind of perception is involved in the disinterested attention claimed as necessary for aesthetic appreciation: there is only attention or inattention to the object[58]. Allen Carlson thinks much on the same lines: his concern is for the aesthetically relevant properties of the object. "The problem with the disinterestedness tradition (...) is that too much attention is paid to the concept of the aesthetic and too little to that of appreciation."[59] It is easy to agree that the question of the aesthetically relevant features has received too little attention[60]. It is also true that the environment, more than art, has forced philosophers to confront these questions, since there are no given objects or privileged perspectives for appreciation.

Carlson's environmental model for the appreciation of nature importantly emphasizes the aesthetic relevance of the cognitive dimensions of the object of appreciation, which he sees as constituents of what the object is 'as such'[61]. However, the view that "[s]cience is the paradigm of that which reveals objects for what they are"[62] is disputable, especially in the context of aesthetics. Even if science is a cultural paradigm of truth, many scientists are well aware that the truth of science is limited to a particular perspective that does not tell all about reality. Further, in the context of human or aesthetic experience, it is not at all evident that the scientific perspective should be given priority before more tacit or praxis-related forms of knowing. My relation to birds is not mediated through ornithology but through personal experience, which says nothing about the priority of either path of appreciation. The reality and density of subjective experience should not be forgotten: it is real, and teaches us about the world, so that "the subjectivising way can be a cognitive path"[63]. As Hepburn also says:

> *The implicit ideal of knowledge here is quite opposed to that austere ideal that sees knowledge as reached only by* ***stripping away*** *supplementation, all subjective interpretation, and zeroing in upon its object - captured (in snapshot fashion) at an instant: all thought of the 'not yet' and the 'no longer' being eliminated.*[64]

To Arnold Berleant, the main problem with disinterestedness is its implied dualism, rooted in early modern aesthetics[65]. He wants to replace the aesthetics of disinterestedness with an aesthetics of engagement, where continuity and participation between experiencer and experienced are central. Disinterestedness is based on a misconstrual of human existence which, in reality, is characterized by "experiential continuity", "human immanence in the world", integration of what the dualist tradition calls subject and object and, most importantly, engagement, which "stresses the active nature of aesthetic experience and its essential participatory quality"[66]. One can agree with the general line of this argument and still wonder whether disinterestedness is not presented in a way which is both too narrow and too severe: narrow in omitting the ethical significance, and severe in the claim that disinterestedness always implies separation of the aesthetic from "ordinary experience"[67]. To take the latter point first - I shall return to the former - it is useful to compare it to Kant's critical philosophy as a whole, where the aesthetic mediates between reason and imagination, freedom and nature, and is presented in the larger context of the mental faculties. These faculties are at work in human existence as a whole and cannot be contrasted to or separated from an ordinary world; in fact Kant does not use 'ordinary' in this sense. Kant's aesthetic thinking may be antisensuous, but it is also synthetizing, not compartmentalizing. The notion of disinterestedness may still have a role to play, and I shall argue that a more generous interest in an object's properties is not incompatible with, but demands a certain disinterestedness.

Berleant's work brings our perceptual - sensory and meaningful - interaction with the environment to the fore. I shall now continue the line of



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criticism against disinterestedness understood as detachment, calling upon affectivity, love, and desire. This should further emancipate disinterestedness from the unrealistic idea of separating experiencer and experienced. One reason to emphasize this point is that it prepares the ground for a second point: only thus emancipated can the notion of disinterestedness fulfil its role as a watchdog in the fields of experience. That is an ethical function.

Sexuality has been a difficult area for aesthetics, because it brings together desire, love and beauty, the pure with the dirty, the selfish with the disinterested[68]. On the one hand, sexuality is subject to moralizing, on the other it is related to our most tender feelings. But if sexuality is understood as the affective dimension of human existence, it should be a central area for aesthetics, since it represents a nonreductive way of being in touch with the world. One may note that Merleau-Ponty does not discuss the ethical implications of sexuality, which may be a lack, particularly if one considers the importance of personal relations in this area of life. In the relation between disinterestedness and desire, I shall concentrate on aspects which are relevant for the aesthetics of environment. Interestingly, even in Berleant's notion of engagement there is a flavour of disinterestedness - the role of the subject is to yield rather than to act - which arouses a doubt that a practically interacting, manipulating subject would be allowed.

Guy Sircello's theory of love gives an illuminating perspective on desire that goes right to the heart of the matter. I want to stress here the discussion of self-indulgence versus appropriate enjoyment, for it points to a discussion of the ethics of disinterestedness. Already the title of Sircello's book, *Love and Beauty*, presents the connection of aesthetic value and love[69]. Interestingly, feeling is here described as a "mode of experience". It is not a feature of a state of consciousness, nor a state of consciousness, nor even simply an activity.[70] Instead, in what Sircello describes as his "New Theory of Love" he relates feeling to experiencing where, as Dewey would put it, doing and undergoing are co-present. In experience, one enjoys a quality, and "all enjoyment can be reduced to enjoyment of my experience"[71]. Since qualities comprise sentiments, moods, emotions, movement, moral and mental qualities as well as qualities found in nature, the range of enjoyment is wide, in fact unlimited, as long as it allows for the participation of the subject[72].

A paradigmatic case of an enjoyable experience is making love, which is one, but not the only reason to make enjoyment synonymous with Love[73]. In enjoyment, it is essential that the subject actively sustains and enhances the enjoyed quality, so that it may expand and develop, at the same time as she is stimulated and satisfied by this activity[74]. The term reproduction refers to this. Important here is that even if the self is actively and indeed interestedly involved, this does not make enjoyment aesthetically inappropriate. On the contrary, Sircello states that enjoyment "must include a component of (...) 'feeling'", and it is feeling that arouses the desire to have more of the enjoyed quality"[75]. The involvement of the subject is thus a necessary component of enjoying, which is a process, not just the outcome of one.

Sircello gives examples of cases of self-indulgence where what is enjoyed is not so much a quality, but the self of the experiencer[76]. Such examples are indeed problematic for aesthetics, not only when it is considered in a more encompassing moral framework where self-indulgence, for instance, becomes a hindrance to action. Another disadvantage of self-indulgence occurs in perception where it hinders the subject from justly perceiving what is there to perceive. Ironically, in such situations the subject is, in one sense, disinterested rather than interested.

It should be noted that a desiring subject is not homogeneous or necessarily enslaved by his desire, whether altruistic or egoistic. For this reason, if we agree with Sircello that desire is always part of love, and hence of the experience of beauty, there is a part to play for an ethically motivated kind of disinterestedness. The distinction between needs and desire which Levinas points to is useful: desire is a yearning for something more and transcendent, while our needs are related to the necessities of life[77]. Even regardless of this, there is no reason to fear desire as such, only blind and insensitive enslavement under one single desire. But then a similar warning is in place for rationality: one can be blind to reason, but also blinded by it, and a typical consequence of this is that classification runs over individuality. A ban on the sexual dimension may be as harmful as unruly yielding to it.

There should be no quarrel about the active character of aesthetic perception: even traditionally, aesthetic experience has been described as demanding active participation[78]. The distinction between action and contemplation is not one between activity and passivity: contemplation is characterized by intense attention and is passive only in the sense of being open to its object, receptive, if it is also, mostly, outwardly passive. The standing back of contemplation, where the ideal is to observe, not to interfere, is a disinterested stance where the object's use value here and now is bracketed. But is such attention, which Iris Murdoch refers to as love, insensitive to, for example, the functionality or vitality of what it observes?[79] If the answer is no, this does not imply that one would appreciate only the healthy, but rather that in appreciating a young and happy animal, one shares in its enjoyment and, likewise, one appreciates and respects an old body or an old face with and through its fragility and years. The objects of such appreciative wonder are not restricted[80].

There is also no necessary conflict between the intense and open attention typically ascribed to contemplation and practical activities. When involved in practical activities, concentration and familiarity with the work create better conditions for attention to and awareness of different qualities. Inattention is, in such situations, better described as 'absentbodiedness' than as absentmindedness. Such perceptual absence is less likely to occur if one is working with one's body. Sensitive perception and creation are not opposed to habit, but instead rely on and presuppose knowledge and familiarity, although neither can be comprehensively explained by referring to established meanings or techniques.

A demand for detachment is certainly problematic for understanding the expressive side of the aesthetic object, which is related to its mood, style, or way of being. The problem is not distance as such, but the presupposed stasis. Otto Baensch, for example, postulates an 'objectivity' of feelings, notably in the work of art, which implies "that the objective feeling should appear to the subject purely as such, without interference and obfuscation by subjective feelings"[82]. But does not feeling, separated from the temporality of life, become reified and strange to itself? It is doubtful that feelings can appear without the engagement of a subject[83], but also important to distinguish between conceptual distinctions and the compartmentalization of actual phenomena. While subject and object, cognition and imagination can be separated theoretically, this is not so in actual experience: there is no subject without an object, no knowledge without a component of imagining, of seeing-as and seeing-in. "Imagination is that which perceives the significance of an experience."[84] One may afterwards remember the feeling as belonging to the object, but it was there only because one was actually present in a situation.

If one rejects the relevance of the real existence of the object in aesthetic experience, this means that disinterestedness is defended on the basis that feeling and imagination, but not cognition and practical judgment, are proper to it[85]. For Stolnitz, the aesthetic attitude is "incompatible with perplexity": no cognitive expectations should be involved[86]. The aesthetic field would thus be the opposite of the practical field. A first question here is whether this is possible, a second, whether it is desirable. If the world as a whole is experienced and inhabited in various interdependent ways - knowing, doing, contemplating, lingering - then the narrowly aesthetic and the supposed ordinary both seem to represent abstract, ideal and partial perspectives. The narrowly aesthetic cannot be a mediating notion. More seriously, disinterestedness itself is undermined if we specify the aesthetic point of view narrowly, for aesthetic attention then paradoxically means that one approaches the world with an aesthetic interest rather than without specific interests. But if specific interests are rejected as improper to the aesthetic, then how does this relate to desire? It seems that a distinction must be made between interests and desire, where the latter may encompass our general interest and engagement in the world.

Another ethical aspect of experience relevant to disinterestedness is that enjoyed qualities have a feedback effect on us[88]. We connect to them, even join them in experience. For this reason, the moral vision of a work of art may affect its audience more deeply than if it were presented in prose. The ethical aspect of art appreciation seems to involve, inescapably, more than detached contemplation and judgment, even more than taking a stance. Similarly, in the environment relations of self to setting are involved. Carlson observes that "our aesthetic appreciation is a significant factor in shaping and forming our ethical views"[89]. However, for disinterestedness the idea of perceiving justly and according to what things are is primary as compared to making us better human beings by shaping our ethical views. In fact, that appreciation should be "without thought for any consequences"[90] can be taken to imply that one should not be concerned about oneself, but it does not imply a lack of concern for the object.

The theme of disinterestedness has, despite the emphasis on bracketing the 'real', highlighted connections between aesthetic experience and human existence at large - without collapsing these into each other. The next theme, revelation, leads to a different separation of experience, where the aesthetic is seen not as less but as more real than the ordinary. But let me observe here that if revelatory experiences are dependent on a reaching and turning towards the world, even as they cause self-forgetfulness in the subject, the same is true of disinterestedness.

Revelation

Experiencing is to some extent conscious: we are conscious of what we attend to, even if we do not reflect on it[91]. But we do not attend to or notice only what we decide to pay attention to, and it is here that revelation is relevant. To take some trivial examples: one may suddenly notice a blue house or feel that the wind is harsher than usual, but paying attention to these qualities cannot be described as either deliberate or nondeliberate action. On the other hand, in a public environment there may be places or buildings we know we should attend to because we have been told so. Attention is, at least in part, dependent on the subject's background knowledge, although it might not be on the top of his mind. Is such silent knowledge then comparable to other forms of tacit knowing, acquired in a world to which we are never totally asleep?

I have hinted that the aesthetic could have a wide relevance in human experience, provided that it is not understood too narrowly. Something of this is implied in Merleau-Ponty's later discussions of the aesthesiological body and the world, which does not exist without the subject who experiences it, but is nonetheless characterized by transcendence and surplus, density and plurality - a world of growth, change, sedimentation. But there might be a risk in this situation, if interaction and fusion are overemphasized. Julia Kristeva warns against the destruction of the self when the flesh of the body melts into the flesh of the world in sensation: "somebody or something else takes away my capacity to signify (...) I become another, another nature, I am beyond."[92]

Aesthetic experience has been singled out as an extreme experience: as a release from the everyday, as the pre-cognitive dimension, or as the moment where truth is established. I shall have a look at some such suggestions and reflect on how they can be related to the world in general: arising from it or reflecting back on it and moulding it. The expansion which accompanies such experiences is generally seen to be positive, although it might be painful[93]. Overcoming oneself, whether it is deliberate or forced, may be a means of getting in touch with the world. On the other hand, it seems that Kristeva unnecessarily isolates sensation: it need not overwhelm us to the point that we are aware of nothing else, and if it momentarily does so, we still rely on the coexistence and accessibility of the world of action and cognition, of identity. For Merleau-Ponty, sensation is a complement and part of our perception and "certitude of the world". If what is given in everyday perception is "not the thing alone, but the experience of the thing (...) a character which appears through a history" there is, in the world, no given and defined identity that would be shattered in an event of perception.[94]

Some descriptions of aesthetic revelation have evolved in a religious context, which is true of epiphany and of Romantic ideas, which in turn have influenced the modern[95]. But as Ronald W. Hepburn points out, the experience of the Romantics does not answer metaphysical questions[96]: the questions of where and to what we reach when we reach beyond have still to be answered by us. One question is whether aesthetic experience is a flight from reality or a perception of things as more pure, but also more real than otherwise; a question which is dependent on what we mean by the real[97].

The first articulation of aesthetic experience as a special kind of heightened experience to be discussed here is 'peak experience', a term used by Harold Osborne. For him, the capacity to arouse and sustain aesthetic experience singles out works of art, and in nature beautiful objects[98]. Aesthetic values are a group of cultural values which stem from "the cultivation of our perceptive powers and the exercise of percipience for its own sake"[99]. Osborne sees aesthetic experience as separated from practical needs: attention is instead directed to "the nature of the experience itself, savouring and discriminating its intrinsic *quale*". But alongside the stress on the intrinsic value of aesthetic experience, Osborne points out that in "the expansion of perception brought into play in the appreciation of art objects" - and, one might presume, in beautiful natural objects - there occurs "a massive increase in the volume and depth of content". Content is thus relevant in aesthetic perception, although not in the form of precise answers to predefined interests. Therefore, it is confusing to find ordinary experience strictly exiled from the realm of the aesthetic.[100]

On various occasions Osborne suggests that the fact that we have a separate domain for art and aesthetic experience is related to the conditions of our civilization, where everyday life does not demand or offer the challenges necessary for vitalized, heightened, or peak experiences to occur[101]. He also discusses aesthetic experience as "a way of escape", which might be positive with respect to aesthetic experience but pessimistic with respect to the rest of life[102]. In such a view, art and the aesthetic have a compensatory role to play, but no clear feedback effect on society.

Aesthetic peak experiences are encompassed in flow experiences, as described in a psychological and physiological context by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi and Rick E. Robinson. They suggest that there is an intimate relation between aesthetic and other experiences, picking out resemblances between experiences of art and experiences of participating in athletic activities, mountain-climbing or playing chess. Their discussion is much on the same line as Osborne's: in a study based on aesthetic peak experiences of art museum professionals there is no discussion of the role of other than aesthetic values in aesthetic experience, even if the general value of people having aesthetic experiences is pointed out. Aesthetic experience, through developing "sensitivity to the *being* of other persons, to the excellence of form, to the style of distant historical periods, to the essence of unfamiliar civilizations (...) changes and expands the being of the viewer."[103] Aesthetic experience is an engaging experience, psycho-physical in character and characterised by

> *an intense involvement of attention in response to a visual stimulus, for no other reason than to sustain the interaction. The experiential consequences of such a deep and autotelic involvement are an intense enjoyment characterized by feelings of personal wholeness, a sense of discovery, and a sense of human connectedness.*[104]

The content arises from the interaction of the object of attention and the skills of the perceiver. But the impossibility of defining the contents does not entail that they are not important for the particular kind of enjoyment aesthetic experience gives. If it is characterized by heightened perception and a savouring of qualities, it would seem probable that whether the qualities are conceived to be good or bad makes a difference[105].

Even if sophisticated knowledge is not a prerequisite of aesthetic experience, increase in our abilities, including tacit knowing and experience, is one of the things we often gain from it. However, this kind of general improvement does not refute the claims that cognitive value may be considered part of aesthetic experience. The notion of epiphany, with roots in Thomas Aquinas, suggests that a more fundamental truth is revealed in the experience, and this idea is discussed by characters in James Joyce's early novels[106]. These discussions are suggestive of an enlargement of the truth involved, which deserves attention. But first, it is fair to give an account of what is explicitly stated of epiphany as truth.

In *Stephen Hero* the main character, Stephen Dedalus, understands an epiphany as "a sudden spiritual manifestation, whether in the vulgarity of speech or of gesture or in a memorable phase of the mind itself". Epiphanies are "the most delicate and evanescent of moments", but also trivial objects like "the clock of the Ballast office", are capable of epiphanies. For the epiphany to occur, the mind must focus on the object, and its structure be apprehended. This brings us to the decisive moment, *claritas*. "*Claritas* is *quidditas*", says Dedalus, echoing Aquinas. "This is the moment which I call epiphany. (...) we recognize that it is *that* thing which it is. Its soul, its whatness, leaps to us from the vestment of its appearance".[107] In *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* a basket is used as an example. Here the

worldliness, although not as opposed to the spiritual, of the whatness or *quidditas* of *claritas* is even more evident. According to Dedalus, *claritas* is not a display of "the divine purpose in anything or a force of generalization which would make the esthetic image a universal one, making it outshine its proper conditions." Instead, it means that "[y]ou see that it is that thing which it is and no other thing."[108]

In what Paul Crowther calls aletheic experience there is a similar emphasis on concreteness. Aletheic experience of art is "non-instrumental awareness of things and persons, which hinges ultimately on a sense of wonder at the unique existence of specific things, and at their potential or hidden aspects which the artist has revealed", or "the wondrous apprehension of thinghood". Aletheic experience can occur also outside the realm of art, for example if "an artefact of any sort fulfils its function in a supremely effective way", whereby it "makes us aware of it *as* a piece of equipment, i.e. as a 'made-thing'". Also here, a "non-instrumental awareness and wonder (...) is the root of the aletheic."[109]

Although whatness and thinghood are about what the object really is, there is both in Joyce and Crowther an emphasis on the experience itself. The importance of attention, apprehension, savouring of the particular object evokes the aesthetic and distinguishes the event from a cognitive experience, in which the object is merely recognized or classified. But if *claritas* is form and *aletheia* truth, they suggest that the experience is not only attention and savouring: there is a something to attend to, something presents itself to us. Then one must ask, if one does not believe that forms are universal or truth eternal, what it is that is encountered and revealed.

Aletheia is not simply truth, but truth as unconcealment, not correspondence or coherence. It is described by Heidegger, in *Sein und Zeit*, as always relative to human existence, and developed in his later work in relation to art, poetry and language[110]. *Aletheia* means unconcealment, but also concealment. As appearance, it is appearance to someone, "*shining* itself is essential to *essence*"[111]. Truth is not an attribute and cannot be objectified or defined conceptually, so that it could be given once and for all. Truth as unconcealment takes place, is an event, temporal and spatial, relational and situational. It is thus inscribed in time at the same time as it is an opening. Truth is essentially on the way, as the German word *Wesen* (essence) suggests: a noun which Heidegger uses as a verb[112].

The emphasis with *aletheia* is on language, but language as speaking or saying, not language as system. Heidegger finds examples of this kind of language in poetry and describes speaking as impersonal in the sense that language speaks to the human being, rather than persons to each other. The truth conveyed in such speaking is suggested to be deep and authentic, but it leaves us with the question where authenticity comes from. John Sallis points out that Heidegger in *Sein und Zeit* describes language as always dependent on a prearticulation in everyday discourse (*Rede*): a "prearticulation that speech will always assume and express". But if Heidegger is here "on the way to thinking as response", it is response to a general *logos*, not to concrete situatedness or social interaction.[113] The description therefore runs the risk of mystifying rather than clarifying the structure of experience, as well as the character of its elements.

How does Heidegger deal with the examples he gives of unconcealment outside language, in art and architecture?[114]. In the example of the temple, generality and an emphasis on unarticulated essence create an ambiguity similar to that of language. Thus in the temple, "its one purpose shines clearly through all its forms", and while it is clear that this purpose has a deep, political significance for the founding and maintenance of a state, it is also ahistorical, beyond the actual everyday life of people. The unconcealment is about "what is, as a whole".[115] Again Sallis articulates the ambiguity: "The end of architecture (in the double sense of *end*) lies in its enclosing a meaning that lies, nonetheless, outside it."[116] This meaning seems to lie in a realm that is absolutely transcendent and independent of human finite existence.

After this glance at the modern source of *aletheia*, we can return to Crowther, who with the notion of aletheic experience has done some work to chart the area between a narrowly conceived aesthetic experience and other forms of human existence. Aletheic experience connects the everyday world of things as utensils with aesthetic appreciation, and in applying the concept one can thus implicitly argue that mundane objects are potential objects of aesthetic experience. But is Crowther's description of aletheic experience still too close to dominant descriptions of aesthetic contemplation, based on art, to fulfil a function it, or some related notion, is called to fulfil? In order to complement the model of aesthetic experience as paradigmatically experience of art - instead of collapsing into it - it at least needs further elaboration. Recall "the wondrous apprehension of thinghood" and note how thinghood relates to the actual functions of things:

> *A functional artefact has a certain 'definiteness of sense' that is determined by its function in getting specific kinds of jobs done. Now, it may be that a certain piece of equipment is so well made, or fulfils its function so well, that it overflows this narrower meaning and makes us aware of it* as *a piece of equipment, i.e. as a 'made-thing'.*[117]

Thinghood is here described as pure thinghood, as what exceeds the particular functionality of the artefact, and is thus disconnected from the normal functioning of the artefact. This elevation of the artefact is also evident in the notion of wondrous apprehension, which is suggested to be different from our normal intercourse with things. But it is scarcely a pregiven essence of the thing in question that is involved here; thinghood rather refers to a concrete but mute presence. In this sense, aletheic experience does not present metaphysical claims. It does not suggest too much, but does it, from the point of view of concrete existence, suggest too little? This concern now

takes two criss-crossing paths: the first more speculative, the second aiming to make sense of *aletheia* as applied to particular contexts.

First, one can ask whether a mistaken fear of essentialism looms behind the expelling of functions from aesthetic experience in contemporary thinking. The fear would be that if the functionality of a particular artefact, say a fork, is contemplated in aletheic experience, we have to postulate a Platonic idea of the fork and a belief in the emanation of the fork's forkness in contemplation. But the fear is unfounded if we accept the idea that we understand artefacts through personal, immediate and mediated experiences and use, not through contemplating a given essence. If we experience the functionality of the artefact it is not a general functionality, but the particular functionality of the artefact as it appears to us here and now, peculiar to this object. This kind of wondrous apprehension is more promising and relevant for the environment than an apprehension of thinghood *per se*[118].

Second, it seems that the temporal aspect of *aletheia* is lost in Crowther's discussion, where aletheic experience is a temporal event only in the trivial sense that all experience takes place in time. It appears as separated from the web of daily life. Again, the basic problem is how human experience in general should be understood, but in addition, there is the Heideggerian context, which intends to situate human existence in the concrete world. This is not easy. It might be useful to note that it is precisely the concreteness of experience - and of Joyce's description of it - that throws an ironic and questioning light on Dedalus's theory of epiphany as he explains it to a friend. Their dialogue is interrupted when "[a] crude grey light, mirrored in the sluggish water, and a smell of wet branches over their heads seemed to war against the course of Stephen's thought" or, again, as "[a] long dray laden with old iron came round the corner of Sir Patrick Dun's hospital covering the end of Stephen's speech with the harsh roar of jangled and rattling metal."[119] Such is the world where the whatness of things is revealed.

Also in Italo Calvino's *Palomar*, a contextual irony surrounds the main character's attempt to grasp aesthetic experience. I referred to a passage from the book in chapter one, and to Greimas, who through this passage describes what he calls *esthésis*: an originary and revelatory experience.[120] In Greimas' understanding aesthetic experience is a moment of discontinuity in ordinary experience, but also a moment of fusion between human being and world, between "the passion of the soul and that of the world"[121]. It is sensuous and transcends the habitual. The aesthetic might harbour "the possibility of a resemantisation of our environing habitual objects and intersubjective relations that are habitual or on the point of becoming so," in two ways. In the first, "one sees an aesthetic charge introduce itself in the functionality of the everyday, in the second, one wishes to make the everyday pass towards an elsewhere" (*un ailleurs*)[122]. Compared to the earlier accounts Greimas' is interesting, because communication is no longer only from the object to the subject, who in obeying a demand of disinterestedness lets the object speak its own truth. The subject is inserted in a situation which is not subjected to aesthetic reduction or disconnected from everyday concerns. On the contrary, those concerns are integrated into the aesthetic. The elsewhere, towards which the everyday passes, may not be a radical beyond but rather a different life, as when "lived experience postpones itself in lived experience"[123].

But what does it mean to have "an aesthetic charge introduce itself in the functionality of the everyday"? Greimas mentions a Dogon door handle and women's clothing, and admits them to be naive, perhaps even archaic examples[124]. Both door handles and clothes are, however, intimately related to the life we live and not, as an axe or an academic cap, distanced from the shared everyday life, belonging only to a particular, symbolically charged context. In intimate objects and everyday situations, I would suggest, the aesthetic charge becomes a charge on the person who uses the handle or communicates with other persons. The everyday situations of which the aesthetically charged objects are a part are of course highly contextual, but the context is also open and flexible, continuously dependent on the parties involved. There arises, thus, the question of how to answer or react to, where to situate, how to grab the beautiful handle or the provoking dress[125]. Meaning is not determined beforehand; it must be made and is made, at least in the minimal sense of maintaining or refusing, even if it does not appear so to the subject, who may only do the expected. This suggests that the aesthetic allows us to see and demands us to be more present, more conscious, more responsible.

In this section I have discussed different perspectives on aesthetic experience as a kind of revelation, where the world is experienced more fully or truly than otherwise. But one can ask whether this revelation is not, more precisely, a *sense* of revelation which is produced when the subject answers to a charge or a demand, when he accepts and thereby articulates what he takes to be offered to him. If truth is unconcealment, the subject might be both a subject of and subject to it. The perspective on aesthetic experience that I find promising assumes that what is experienced in an aesthetic situation is equally dependent on the subject and the object side. Tentatively, environmental aesthetic experience is presentation and questioning, a beginning, but without end.

Describing aesthetic experience

Can one understand aesthetic experience without metaphysics? This is perhaps a shocking question, for what has metaphysics to do in the comforting presence of sensuous concreteness, where if there is transcendence, there is also the safety net of appearance? A main point about the traditional notion of the aesthetic has been that we do not care for the reality of what we experience, so that without metaphysics thinking has postulated a division between reality and appearance. "One must not be in the least prepossessed in favour of the real existence of the thing, but must preserve complete indifference in this respect, in order to play the part of judge in matters of

taste."[126] Kant's words still formulate a widely shared presumption in philosophical aesthetics.

If we do not deal with real things, no wonder that aesthetics is popular. Luc Ferry's observation that in contemporary Western societies the question of meaning "tends to fall off or even become ridiculous" points to a sad tendency: what cannot be stated 'objectively' is passed in silence[127]. But are not the ban on reality and the postulate of appearance themselves metaphysically loaded? If we liberate ourselves from metaphysics, from serious reflection on the world as a whole, in order to be able to freely reflect on how it appears, we implicitly state that the real remains out of reach and in particular outside the realm of aesthetic phenomena. Then one can ask, with Simon Critchley, if "the fear of metaphysics [is] also a fear of dirty hands?"[128]

Perhaps this is too harsh. But my point is that the division, even if not explicitly supported, functions as a circumscription of the field of aesthetics and that it causes problems particularly in the field of environmental aesthetics, which easily becomes either a contradiction in terms, or shallow and uninteresting. The division also causes problems for reflections on aesthetic experience, where the discussions may be illuminating, but mostly at some point disappointing. One is left with questions. How does aesthetic experience relate to other experiences, to my life, to history, to other people?

Perceptual experience is temporal, but it can be analyzed as consisting of different components. Sensation, praxis, imagination or understanding pick out aspects of the whole which are not isolated, but mix in experience. Aesthetic experience, whatever else it is, is a similar mix. In its relation to other experiences and to the world, it might be approached in terms of a rhizome or a complex that is related to other complexes, of which some but not all may be subaltern to it[129]. This kind of thinking can better accommodate relations between the aesthetic and the nonaesthetic and consider aesthetic phenomena through traits or qualities. Clearly, to abandon dualist ontology or objectifying language does not as such solve any problems, but it provides a better and more generous perspective on the environment and on experience.

Instead of seeking one definition to cover aesthetic experience, it is better to preserve its layers, varieties and complications. This is only an advantage, since one should be able to take the particularity of the experience into account. The situation is complicated: a subjective experience in a concrete and unique situation with a large number of interrelated components and constituents, where we should not forget the contents, for they are certainly part of what feeds the play of perception, imagination and understanding.

If one focuses on analyzing the constituents of experience the notions of aesthetic experience, of the aesthetic character of experience, or of aesthetic features of experience become, in a certain way, less problematic; the same would be true of the practical, the religious, the ethical, the political. An experience can have a more or less aesthetic character: the aesthetic has more to do with gradation than with different kinds. An aesthetic experience may contain moments of revelation, but an experience may also be aesthetic to some degree without overturning our world view. Some experiences we call aesthetic without hesitation, but experience can also have a weaker aesthetic character, so that it is not only aesthetic. The aesthetic component may go against the expected and habitual, but it may also deepen our understanding and feeling for the mundane. In either case it differs from mere recognition, from an attitude in which things are interesting and relevant only to the extent that I can use them for a certain purpose. Thus the aesthetic, however weakly or humbly present, always activates or enlivens the tissue of the world.

But questions about the characteristics of the aesthetic remain. How is it related to the everyday, the ethical, the practical, the cognitive, or to sensuous pleasure and pain? What are the typical features of aesthetic experience? What kind of perspective should we call aesthetic? In the following, I offer a description, not a definition, which suggests necessary ingredients of aesthetic experience and experiencing aesthetically. It is systematic in an obvious way, but it is not intended to be hierarchical, although it might appear so. A limitation must be pointed out: my idea of the aesthetic is, in the final instance, demanding, which means that a meta-axiological claim is implied. The aesthetic is more than what pleases immediately; it is an anthropocentric notion; and it is a dimension of existential import: not just the object, but also the subject stands out. This is especially important in contemporary societies, where the care and welfare of particular human beings is becoming increasingly marginal compared to the cult of economic growth and the legitimized selfishness of people in responsible positions. That the everyday is hidden and belittled is not a problem of aesthetics only.

My description is synthetic in at least two ways. First, the aesthetic is seen as an area of mediation between cognitive and practical, knowledge and values, past, present, and future. Second, the description is eclectic, and openly so, since I believe that there is a common ground, a reality or at least a potential of human experience which the different theories approach to the best of their capacities. I discuss aesthetic experience from four angles, enumerating four aspects, or characteristics: sensuousness, sensitivity, imagination, and evaluation. These accompany the experience, which is both passive and active. In all of them there is a receptive and a projective component: none belongs only to the subject or the object side. They are also mutually interdependent; there is no succession of stages, but a simultaneity of levels in experience. But the last aspect, the evaluative, differs from the others in that it demands, more clearly, not just response but responsibility. This 'vertical dimension'[130] is particularly important in the environment, where what is experienced is so insistently real. I have therefore singled out response as the theme of a final section.

Sensuousness

The sensuous accentuates that aesthetic experience is here and now, that it takes place concretely, that its object is accessible. The multisensuous character of environmental experience is well recognized, however, I would like to add some points about sensuousness and its weight in all aesthetic experience[131]. Sensuousness does not point only or primarily to the different senses, but to the integration of sensations in the experiencer's body. I am aware, in defending the view that aesthetic experience always is sensuous to some degree, that there are fairly formal and immaterial objects of aesthetic pleasure, for example mathematical functions. But although they are immaterial, their appreciation is not necessarily devoid of sensuous qualities. One can follow the function as one follows the line of a painting, so that there is a rhythm to it, a felt form or character which goes beyond what can be presented in a merely abstract way[132]. The abstract formula might define the phenomenon, but not what it is to us when appreciated. In a text, the sensuous element is connected to the rhythm, melody and sounds of language: it exists in the text as read, silently or aloud. Language, even as a system, is not only vocabulary and grammar, but also material.

The sensuous comes alive and is present only through an experiencing subject and is, for this reason, part of all feeling, mood, and atmosphere[133]. "Something emerges from the arrangement of tones or colors, which was not there before, and this, rather than the arranged material, is the symbol of sentience", or "I am not a sensible subject, I am *the* sensible"[134]. To the sensuous belongs an air of intimacy and anonymity: the sensuousness of the object addresses us as living and sentient beings beyond names or social identity. As Mikel Dufrenne says, "it is to the world that the animal is close, to the elementary forces that traverse and animate the sensible"[135]. The presence of the sensuous need not mean that identity is ruled out, although it is not particularly important. However, there is no necessary rivalry between the sensuous, the cognitive and the axiological in concrete experience, even if one easily reverts back to one of these when commenting upon phenomena.

Dufrenne's elaborations on voice and flesh, on the relations of sonority, audibility and the body, offer examples of how and where the sensuous operates and also provides a bridge to the next theme, sensitivity. I shall relate the suggestions more or less as they appear in *L'oeil et l'oreille*, a text which is remarkably rich in sensuous resources, beginning with flesh. Dufrenne points out that "it is from the orchestral sough of the tongue, as Barthes says, that this voice rises, it is from the background of the sonorous that the singular sonorous emerges, from the background of the flesh, the flesh of a singular body." "Always the paradox of the sensible, of this ingraspable originary: the flesh of the body, the same and still other." These remarks do not deny that language is discursive and importantly so. They only point out that there is, especially in some forms of language, a voice and a possibility for the subject to "be lost".[136] Let me comment that being lost in this sense can be a relief. To those who consider such a view dangerously irrational it can be pointed out that without sometimes getting lost, re-orientation is difficult.

I shall add some quotations which deal with music and nature in China that are relevant for the environment in its natural dimensions. "The wind blows [*souffle*], the ocean murmurs, the bird sings, the human makes music. It is from nature that music is born."[137] What counts in the oriental conception, says Dufrenne, "is the intensity of the experience", creating and receiving, without a clear separation:

> *The work makes an appeal to us to communicate with the world, both in order to be created and in order to be received: it must inspire in order to be inspiring. Inspired, that is inhabited by the qi, the breath {souffle}, the energy of the naturing; this energy must pass into the work, and from there into the receiver of the work who permits it to be fulfilled, as the player of music assures it in its musical being.*[138]

Sensuousness highlights the intimate interaction of subject and world in aesthetic experience and is a necessary ingredient of it. As an element of and in experience, the sensuous differs from materiality, which it touches. The sensuous is of the flesh, of the animated, breathing, respiring, perspiring and inspired body, but it is also rooted in an opaque body and world. Therefore, it functions as a bridge between the polar notions of matter and spirit.

Sensitivity

The relevance of experienced qualities relates sensuousness and sensitivity, but with the latter, the focus is on savouring and discrimination. Sensitivity is larger in scope, since it is relevant not only for sensuous qualities but also for various forms of cognitive and ethical discernment[139]. Nevertheless, it seems that in the aesthetic context - as in everyday social interaction - the central point of sensitivity has to do with a capacity to perceive emotional nuances and variations of style, of ways of being or doing. This might be because emotion, as such, is a highly synthetic area. To feel this or that for someone is based in an appreciation which is felt as direct, but importantly based in what we know and think and have experienced about and with this person[140]. This cognitive and axiological ground of feeling may or may not be clear to us, but we usually trust it and, usually, with good reason.

Both sensuousness and sensitivity overlap with the affective dimension as described by Merleau-Ponty. Through sensitivity we not only experience but reflect on "that sector of experience which evidently has meaning and reality only for us (...) our affective environment"[141]. The subject is anonymous, but only relatively: the body is, as a kind of natural self, ambiguously both part of what I consciously am and something else. If the sensuous is

closer to the something else, sensitivity is vigorously open to both, as the "rays" which detect the invisible in the visible, where nothing is definitely beyond attention[142]. Sensitivity channels the functions of acute aesthetic perception which is open to the sensuous and manifold but also, when needed, reflective and critical[143]. To take an example, in Mies van der Rohe's *Barcelona pavilion* architectural quality is importantly dependent on mute, nonformal qualities of material, texture and light, but to become part of our experience of the building we must notice them, be sensitive, pay attention.

With sensitivity I point to a dimension which is dynamically interactive. While it is not goal-directed, it is more articulated and articulating than the sensuous, which may remain outside conscious attention. The interactive character of sensitivity does not influence but is the very medium of our perception of the way things are. As an ability of the subject, it has a correlate in the object's experienced expressiveness[144]. When we point out the sensitivity of the handling of colours in a painting or of light in a building, it refers to an activity, to how a creative agent performed her work. As either perception or making, sensitivity is creatively responsive.

In experience, a subject is involved in both sensitivity and expressiveness. Sensitivity as perception of character and feeling is also an ascription of feeling, mood and style which hypostasizes a subject. If in aesthetic experience the object is experienced as a quasi-subject, one must remember that in the environment there is not necessarily a given object. Subjectivity may then be ascribed to a place, as the notion of *genius loci* shows[145]. This does not imply that one believes that a building is comparable to a human or animal subject; that it is sombre or reassured in the same way. To discuss this kind of sensitive discernment in terms of belief is to be on the wrong track. Beliefs belong with identification, with another logic and knowledge than the one involved in perceiving the character of artefacts, landscapes, animals or persons. In addition, as Kaj Noschis points out, to relate to a made object as an imprint or trace of subjectivity is to acknowledge the limits of the rationally cognizable[146]. Hence it is of existential importance.

In the semiotic framework too, one can find the view that emotions have a mediating role in human experience. "It is through the mediation of the perceiving body that the world is transformed into meaning." As described by Greimas and Fontanille emotion is, however, in a traditional way, subordinated to higher, cognitive capacities. Emotions, as a bridge between feeling and imagination, are a step from a less to a more articulated relation to the world, where a conscious subject faces objects. In the emotional, subject and object are still "intimately linked to each other, the subject for the world and the world for the subject". The object is animated, but in a primitive way: "the object, in emotion, would have the tendency to become the partner-subject of the feeling subject" and "the identity of each is still unstable and depends on the identity of the other".[147]

If the affective dimension has a priority before action or understanding, this should not be understood to mean that it is left behind in these dimensions. But the priority of the affective means that even if a place or a building is not always remembered because of its atmosphere, a place we have visited will always be remembered with an atmosphere, always suffused with character in memory[148]. In cases where neither an object of perception nor a cultural context are given - a natural environment or a strange city - sensitivity becomes even more important, for perception of character is one of the means by which the world is individuated in human experience, by which we remember situations, people and places.

There is another feature peculiar to sensitive perception in the environment. The character of an environment is radically dependent on the perceiver, not just on how he is looking, but also on what he can see, on his position and modes of perception. If there are living things present in the environment - a stranger, an elephant, a cow - the interaction is yet more radical than in the experience of objects and places, where interaction remains more on the perceptual level. Through my interpretation of a situation where another is present, and my accompanying behaviour, I influence the other directly. If all goes well, the elephant concludes that I am harmless, and I can thus remain a disinterested observer. But if the cow concludes that I am afraid, she will certainly enjoy the situation, and I must actively decide to either escape or stand up to her. The way I understand the emotional import of the other and of the situation influences what she actually is in that situation. This knowledge is not abstract, but part of the situation. Thus sensitivity is of practical value. Note here that a detached subject would be restricted to the role of a witness and stripped of the possibility to interact with the situation.

Imagination

If there is overlapping between sensuousness and sensitivity, the same is true between sensitivity and imagination. Imagination is often understood as differing from ordinary perception by opening perspectives on what is not the case which, on the other hand, might be a way to find a place for human freedom[149]. There is no quarrel that imagination is relevant to aesthetic experience: the discussions are about the relation between imagination and perception, and the existence of a faculty of imagination. The relation is central to environmental aesthetics, particularly when it deals with the built environment, which is rich in symbols and images. What is the relation between these to our everyday world, what is the relation between what buildings suggest and what the world is? It is not at all clear that a line can be drawn neatly. Suggestive and symbolic elements of our habitat relate to and mould what we take to be our basic social reality in different ways.

I shall defend a view which sees imagination as a dimension of perception and thinking, a way of transcending the immediately given or evident, which is rooted in the materials of the world, a way "in which perception and thought are intermingled"[150]. There is imagination which adds or deepens our understanding of the world, "which gives to the real its weight and assures us of the presence of the hidden and far away" but as Dufrenne adds, there is also distortive imagination[151]. This positive and negative potential is not particular to imagination: we may abuse or be mistaken also in the areas of rational discourse, recognition or feeling. Compared to sensitivity, imagination is, then, a more consciously synthetisizing aspect of experience, closer to the subject's world view, desires and hopes, which may be articulated and tested in imaginative reflection. But clearly imagination may also appear in local details or light-hearted moments, as a pause or addition to larger and more serious projects to which it may add a touch of humour or irony.

A reason to emphasize the role of imagination in environmental experience is that it offers a way to deal with the particularity of existence in concrete and unique situations, where the elements or contents of a situation, a space or an object are as important as in art. It is ultimately these elements which feed reflective experience. If one sees imagination as a potential of all perception, this does not imply that there is a separate faculty of imagination[152]. In the following, I shall first comment upon an illuminating but to my mind fallacious distinction between ordinary perception and 'perception-as', and then refer to some ideas that, on the contrary, stress the interdependence of imagination and our concrete environment.

To Roger Scruton, imagination is "peculiar to self-conscious beings", for it presupposes the capacity to reflect on what is perceived, to "transcend the immediate"[153]. Agreeing that imagination transcends, I find the idea of literal perception, with which it is contrasted, dubious. This doubt is important, for a misunderstanding of perception also trivializes our view of imagination. Scruton bases the separation of imagination and literal perception on a difference between the rational capacities of human beings and animals, where the latter are said to be incapable of imagination[154]. For in animals, he claims, there is a causal relation of perception and belief, so that if the cat sees a mouse hide behind the stone, this will cause the cat to believe that there is a mouse behind the stone. That the same would apply to a human being is not the point. Scruton's point is that in human, but not in animal experience, a word - I would presume, any object of perception - is "the point of intersection of indefinitely many meanings". In the mouse example the crucial difference between human and cat is, then, not whether it is believed that there is a mouse behind the stone, but what the mouse is to the percipient, what it represents. To a human being, the mouse has meaning, while for the cat, there is only "a causal relation between environment and information".[155]

Here, I think, Scruton simplifies the matter. This becomes more evident when he claims that "[m]usical movement is not part of the material world and therefore not something of which a bird could take cognizance"[156]. Why should a bird perceive its audible environment according to the scientific explanation of the world? This sounds very demanding, for birds are objects, not subjects of science. It is more probable that a bird perceives music in a similar way to its perception of birdsong and sounds in general, and we know that in urban environments birds incorporate urban noise in their singing. We do not know how they experience these sounds, but the fact that they actively relate to them and express this in their behaviour suggests that they hear the signals as something. Birds make sense of sounds in a way that is not just instinctual or relying on preprogrammed, inborn patterns. The suggestion that only self-conscious beings can hear movement in music presupposes that music has a primary character which is not movement; that music is something (separate notes, sequences) to the percipient apart from being perceived as something. But if hearing movement does not involve reflection and comparison of "fictional" movement with underlying, "real" sounds, a perceiver does not have to be self-conscious to hear it. To say that birds hear movement probably involves a smaller risk of misrepresentation than to describe their perception in rigidly scientific terms.

If literal perception in Scruton's account equals perception according to a scientific explanation, the reason may be that both are abstractions. But perception is always perception-as. Scruton may be right in pointing out that only beings who can reflect on themselves can reflect on what they perceive, but he is wrong in assuming that there exists a literal perception[157]. This idea presupposes that we first know what the thing literally is, that it is given outside appearance as a certain something. But it is not: the thing is given only in appearances, each of which can be and is complemented.

The suggestion that the notion of 'literal perception' might trivialize perception and imagination generally can now be spelled out. If we see literal perception and imaginative perception as different in kind, the latter becomes wider in scope and more free, but also less true. Literal perception would give us the object as it really is, whereas imaginative perception could only suggest what the object could be but is not, or is only in a subjective, unstable and metaphorical way. The alternative view, which seems both more realistic and more fruitful, is to see ordinary, less reflective, and imaginative, more reflective perception as belonging to the same kind. Neither is by nature more true: we can indeed be mistaken in what we take things or phenomena to be in our normal perception, to which a more imaginative, on first sight far-fetched view might bring correction.

There is an additional point to perceiving-as. When Scruton says that we hear movement in music even if there is no object that actually moves, it might be better to say that we understand movement through such perceptual experience as hearing music[158]. Our idea of movement is based on perceptual experience. The notions by which we order the world are formed and transformed in our intercourse with the world, and there is even a sense in which we inhabit both the world and language by speaking[159].

Here, the idea of concrete imagination, used by Mary Warnock to characterize Sartre's use of concrete description as part of his philosophical argument, is illuminating[160]. Concrete imagination is related to the narrative side of imagination, which is often present when we attend aesthetically to a

building or a place[161]. These can suggest how things are and how they were and how they might unfold from here on. Through the narrative component, imagination has a central place in aesthetic experience, for it links facts and ideals, how things are and how we see them. A function and a history are inescapably here through the building, and they might become a question and a challenge for the subject who shares the building's concrete reality. The insight gained from reflectively perceiving a particular perceptual object or scene is co-productive with and inseparable from understanding. Discussing an interpretation of some lines from Coleridge, Warnock notes that

> *thinking about {sexual impotence} may be indistinguishable from thinking about {imaginative impotence}; the same images, the same feelings (of power, of possession, of successfull* ***activity****) may spontaneously arise in either case. (...) We need not think that he was* ***really*** *talking about his sexual powers and therefore* ***not really*** *talking about his imaginative powers.*[162]

We understand things emotively and cognitively through the concrete, which is transcended and simultaneously maintained. Thus in Coleridge and Wordsworth imagination is, according to Warnock, a combining power which can "conjure up an image; (...) make us see the image as universally significant; and (...) induce in us deep feelings in the presence of the image". This may happen in dreams, for our inner eye, or before a real scene. Common to these is the strong connections between "seeing or observing in detail, feeling, and seeing-as-symbolic".[163] In this early nineteenth century view on imagination the connection between image, general significance and feeling is important, and one can agree with it without accepting the accompanying metaphysical claims about universal significance or deep feeling. Instead, I would like to emphasize the active character of imagination, also as responsible for the felt intensity of imagining: we not only reflect on how things could be, we also invest ourselves in this reflection.

Imaginative perception is probing and apprehensive, and it relies on different elements, narrative and other, of a factual or a more metaphorical character in order to deepen understanding. But understanding need not be object-directed; it can also be directed at what is opened up in the intercourse of experiencing subject and aesthetic object, in the 'between' of the situation. This happens in art, when truth is ascribed to a work which succeeds in presenting a convincing, revealing, acceptable view on some aspect of existence. Such truth is not factual, it cannot be checked against 'objective' information. The images of a poem can have the power to make us think and reflect, to demand our judgment, which will not be determinate. As Hepburn says, art then "'teases' life. It sets life tasks for feeling and for reinterpreting, reorientating." Thus the image, "despite its particularity, resonates and reverberates in our experience far beyond the occasion of reading or viewing the work itself."[164] But it must be underlined that the fruitfulness of the aesthetic object for reflection is due also to its otherness: speaking to us, it addresses us from an elsewhere. The work of art "teaches us to see and gives us something to think about in a way an analytic work cannot, because analysis is unable to find in an object but what we have put there"[165].

Hepburn notes that serious aesthetic appreciation of nature can be based on an "objectivizing movement of the mind", where understanding is central, but that there is another option for serious aesthetic appreciation of nature related to an imaginative annexing of natural elements into the subject's own inner life[166]. Here an aspect of deepening is central, modifying object and subject in and through an imaginative, sensitive and thoughtful activity. But it is important to remember that the objectivizing and the self-reflective movements are both present in aesthetic experiencing. Object-directed aesthetic experience differs from a merely cognitive experience through a reflective element which feeds back onto the subject, a feedback that is accentuated in architecture, where our understanding of the environment is simultaneously an understanding of our own place in society and nature. If imagination generally "constructs for us *a scene* to look at"[167], the scene of environments is also here for us to live in.

Evaluation

The connection between imagination and a vision of the world and the inclusion, in imaginative reflection, of the subject's own position point out the evaluative component of aesthetic experience. In aesthetic experience, probing into the object of experience also shows the subject to herself as she relates to the appearing object. She need not always be consciously self-reflective - asking 'who am I, what am I?' - but no more need she consciously reflect on the object. Both appear in the experience in relation to each other: perceiving what the object is or could be is accompanied by the emergence into sight of the perceiver's position.

But is this subject my ordinary self, the historical person who was born at a certain date and lives this particular life? I have emphasized that the aesthetic subject should be understood concretely, but that perspective may not be enough. If my personality has a strong influence on the experience, the potential for change and reorientation may diminish. If I am too interested - in the trivial sense - in a work of art or in a place, there may be no space for unexpected elements; for the connoisseur the risk that perception turns into mere recognition is real. There is therefore truth to the idea of a universal subject: in aesthetic experience one takes the stance of a general human being, feeling one's way into the object of experience, into its situation, feeling as anyone would feel. Subjectivity is not idiosyncrasy, and the existential perspectives which may be opened up are not restricted to my person, in scope or relevance - in that case they would be of no value. But a transcendental subject cannot judge - and the difficulties increase in cases of dependent beauty, where the object also serves a purpose[168]. To judge, I

must be a concrete, situated person, experienced in certain ways: this is the platform from which I open towards what is different, yet enough similar to touch. My concrete person is also the particular which may change. I make my judgement reaching towards truth and validity, but I cannot possess them or become general, only different.

Our personal perspective changes and is enlarged through serious aesthetic experience, but "it trivializes (...) to see oneself merely as the detached viewer - or indeed as a noumenally free and rational ego"[169]. One changes only relative to what one was, and on a first consent: the work of art or the enthralling space cannot make us other if we resist with all our will. The aesthetic seduces, it does not use force. The preliminary character of what we think and know is demonstrated; preliminary because we shall never reach the point of knowing everything and because the way things are (to us) is always in part dependent on what we accept[170].

What I am and what the object is are not decided on factual grounds, but are always also a question of what I desire and value. This is part of perceiving-as: to dwell in a work of art, to spend time with it and to return include an acceptation of the work. This does not mean that one accepts all aspects of it, only that there is a general acceptance of the company of the work taken as a whole and an agreement to reflective perception. Entering the work, one agrees to enter a particular ethos, to take a stance, to try a position[171]. The evaluative component of aesthetic experience does not implicate an explicit judgment, a verdict or a sentence. The axiological permeates the process as a whole: judging (measuring, weighing, reflecting) is preliminary present already at early stages of, for example, reading a novel. We let ourselves be drawn into the work, interested, engaged - resisting some parts - willing to confront what it offers and be influenced by it. If judgment is in this sense present in experience from the start, aesthetic value is sought and located in the relation, rather than in the object as such. The *je ne sais quoi* is not an abstract quality that just cannot be named, but is part of the whole experience.

The more we pay attention to the concreteness and the elements, or substance of particular experiences, and to the role of particular, historical subjects, the more important the axiological dimension becomes. It illuminates the engagement of the subject, the passion and eagerness with which serious aesthetic experiences are sought and pursued. This is about much more than kicks or a stimulation of our mental faculties (*Erlebnisse*): about experiences which, through being actively undergone become part of our whole experience of life (*Erfahrung*)[172]. I am not saying that aesthetic experiences are identical to experience from life, but I am suggesting that the role of aesthetic experience in life exceeds that of a pastime, commentary or shock absorber. It does not look backwards only, but also forwards.

Response

At this point, I would again like to call upon the thinking of Merleau-Ponty and Levinas. In Merleau-Ponty's idea of perception understood broadly as the interaction of human being and environment an axiological element is suggested in the directional relation between the human being and the world. It is true that Merleau-Ponty does not much discuss ethics; a more central theme is the axis of sensuousness and cognition[173]. Yet the experience of space is presented as permeated by directionality, in terms of a meaningful being towards the world (*être au monde*), and the social dimension, being as being among others, is seen as constitutive to human existence, as part of body and language alike[174]. There is a place for values and ethics in Merleau-Ponty's conception of human existence, even when it is not explicitly pointed out.

I assemble my observations around the notion of *'response'*, situated at the centre of aesthetic experiencing and related to reflectivity, engaged interaction and interdependence.[175] In response arises the unity of experience, which links subject and object in a space which is peculiar to this situation[176]. Being in the world is not only to be towards the world but, as can be read from Levinas, also to be for it in a particular situation. "The Self is in itself and in itself it is *here* and here it is for the world."[177] To see perception not only as actual response, but as an inclination to respond is in line with Merleau-Ponty's thinking especially in *Le visible et l'invisible*, where perceptual interaction is not described only as activity. There is also a primordial passivity to this activity, a givenness of flesh[178]. Commenting on his earlier work, Merleau-Ponty notes that instead of the posited objectivity of the world there is a primordial brute or wild being, visibility which is not 'for-itself', but transcendent[179]. On the basic level - the level beyond which we do not get - there is no simple immanence, no here we could put our finger on, no presence identical to itself.

As noted earlier, the sensuous plays an important role in Levinas' thinking, not the least as a condition of ethical awareness. He brings out the axiological implications of receptivity or responsiveness and shows their connection to responsibility. The sensuous has a double role: it is a necessary condition of ethics, but there is also a danger that the subject remains within the sensuous, remains a happy egoist, without awakening to the demands of the other. "The presence of the Other (...) wrenches experience away from its esthetic self-sufficiency, from its *here*, where it rests in peace. And by invoking it he transforms it into a creature"[180]. In addition to explicit references to the aesthetic there are also deeper analogies between the experience of alterity and aesthetic judgement. Such analogies are found, for example, between Levinas' description of infinity as the constant need to begin again and the indeterminacy of the judgement of taste[181]. 'Transcendence' is a key term here.

The positive role of the sensuous is played out in passages where Levinas follows the semantic sidewalks of response, which lead to respiration and inspiration, responsiveness and responsibility[182]. These refer to a radical influence of the neighbour or the other person on the subject, who is subjected to responsibility[183]. In a traditional sense he is neither active nor passive; the polarization of agency and passivity is cancelled. Levinas often mentions the "passivity of passivity" or "a passivity more passive than any passivity": a passivity which is not chosen by the subject[184]. However, passivity is not one "of inertia or effect, but sensibility (...) more contact than the skin can touch"[185]. In this passivity, I am affected and touched rather than convinced; I am not won by arguments, I give myself in[186].

There is no definite answer to the challenges posed by and in a situation of ethical concern. The ethical fosters total responsibility, which includes the inability to hide behind correct answers, concepts or rules. In this it is similar to the judgement of taste, which is also a constant challenge, a demand on the subject who will never be able to articulate a sufficient answer. But this is no shortcoming. Levinas refers to the need to begin again, to the impossibility of finding a place where to rest or remain as to the "glory of the infinite", which is dependent on "the human adventure of an approach of another"[187]. The finite is not subordinated to the infinite, but affected by it; the other is simultaneous with the subject who now exists without interest, in a nearness other than presence[188].

The emphasis on the impossibility of thematizing that which is 'otherwise than being' constitutes another analogy to aesthetic judgement, to its nonconceptual character. Also the regulative function of moral and aesthetic ideas in Kant implies that we do not live with values in the way we live among things. Further, Merleau-Ponty's denial of the objectivity of the world, of the immanence not only of the other but of the whole world as it exists for us, suggests that responsibility should be extended to encompass more than other persons. The way we perceive things is not innocent or separate from how events unfold[189].

For Levinas, ethics and transcendence are inseparable and belong to a vertical dimension different from the factual world: "the term 'transcendence' means precisely that one cannot think God and being together"[190]. Also Merleau-Ponty uses this language when he describes Christianity as an attempt to reconcile the vertical and the horisontal, God and society, values and action, and points out that such a reconciling movement is central in Hegel's philosophy of history[191]. But the reconciliation is never finished: value resists reification. The axiological is necessarily connected to subjectivity. It is not realized but aimed at in human existence, which is directed rather than suffused by value.

The relevance of this axiological dimension to aesthetics and *vice versa* is anchored in feeling. Merleau-Ponty thinks that if we would model our understanding of history on literature or art, we would find a truer meaning of history, "[f]or the intimacy of every expression with every expression, their belonging to the same order, obtains by the junction of individual and universal"[192]. The emphasis on expression rather than symbol, and act rather than artefact, demonstrates the irreplaceable role of the individual and his tacit knowing. It is only temporarily that we may feel a proximity of a highest good, for its realization, which can at most be an approach, is itself temporal. The closeness of ethics and aesthetics on a level of innocence, expression and sensibility, which is not surpassed but remains close at hand, brings to light the possibility of creativity and originality, not as substantial newness but as renewed wonder, freshness, originality[193].

Subjective experience includes and relies on shared contexts, but these cannot be reduced to general structures. Individual experience is crucial in establishing and transforming our vision of the world and our platforms of action. Taken the importance of actual experience, it is no wonder that aesthetic experience fits badly in the mechanistic and objectivist models of perception. It always exemplified what does not fit these models, so that one may suspect that its granted autonomy could have been a way to shuffle it to the side, if also to rescue it. The aesthetic also opens questions which are hard to answer in isolation from the totality of the perceptual process. How do we shift to see the aesthetic aspect if sensation and understanding are different? More problematic still are the links between qualities and meanings.

There are several attitudes we can take towards the world: practical, cognitive, aesthetic. None of them is normal or ordinary. We may be sensitive or insensitive to affective and aesthetic qualities, but aesthetic sensibility is not different in kind from ordinary sensibility. Affectivity, cognition, intentionality are elements of the everyday, which is nothing but the lived world as a whole. When our attention shifts we do not move to another world. As Levinas observes, the everyday world is not our prison, it "does not merit to be called a fall, but has its balance, its harmony and its positive ontological function (...) We take it seriously at the very moment when the world seems to burst and we still act and gesture reasonably and the condemned drinks his glass of rum. To call it everyday and condemn it as non-authentic is to misjudge the sincerity of hunger and thirst."[194]

Everyday life is not exclusively practical, but neither is aesthetics at home only in moments of leisure when the necessities of life do not press on us. Things are instrumental and beautiful; we look at a chair with a view to its functionality and at the same time appreciate its beauty. It would be a mistake to indicate a fixed place for the aesthetic, since its fruitfulness is tied to its role as a space for synthetic but indeterminate reflection.

Notes

[1] Eagleton 1990, 13.

[2] Sparshott 1963, 144.

[3] For discussions and revalidations of sensuality, see Berleant 1964, Sartwell 1996, Sircello 1989.

[4] See, in particular, the letters on the aesthetic education of man, Schiller 1984/1975, 139-230.

[5] For a discussion of Schiller's aesthetics in this respect, including its shortcomings, see Eagleton 1990, 103-118, also 142-143. It can be noted that the points of departure and intellectual context of Kant and Schiller are very different. Kant starts out from natural philosophy, or science; his is an enlightened mind for which emotion, passion and will are strange themes; compare Gulyga 1988. Schiller's focus is not so much on transcendental man as on the tormented and split modern subject; compare Simpson 1988, 12-16.

[6] Gibbons 1994; see also Guyer 1993, Henrich 1992, Savile 1993.

[7] R.W. Hepburn first pointed this out in 1966; see Hepburn 1984, 14-15 (reprinted) and 1968, 50-52.

[8] See Sibley 1987/1959.

[9] Kinnunen 1990, 87-108.

[10] For challenges to the institutions of high art and the presumptions of an aesthetics built on these, see Shusterman 1992 and 1995.

[11] See note 3, chapter one.

[12] For arguments against the isolation of the aesthetic from other strands of experience, see Berleant 1991, 9-50.

[13] Dewey 1980/1934, 10. In this context, I follow Dewey in contrasting ordinary and aesthetic.

[14] Dewey 1980/1934, 35.

[15] Compare Shusterman 1992, 6.

[16] Dewey 1980/1934, 41; compare Kristeva's views, as noted in the section on revelation below, in this chapter.

[17] Dewey 1980/1934, 49, 54.

[18] Dewey 1980/1934, 40.

[19] Dewey 1980/1934, 42.

[20] Compare Hilde Hein's suggestion that aesthetic consciousness, important as it is, should not be considered the basis of aesthetic value; Hein 1976, 150.

[21] Beardsley 1981, lxi.

[22] Compare Beardsley 1982, 78, 286-7.

[23] Beardsley 1981, 527-529 and 533. Shusterman notes the difficulty of deciding the magnitude of an experience, 1992, 56.

[24] Beardsley 1982, 288.

[25] Beardsley 1982, 100.

[26] Dickie 1965 and 1974.

[27] Dickie 1974, 188.

[28] Dickie 1965, 133.

[29] Dickie 1965, 129.

[30] Dickie 1965, 129.

[31] Dickie 1974, 190.

[32] Dickie 1974, 183-4.

[33] Dickie 1974, 192.

[34] Langer 1964, 17.

[35] For example, Dickie 1974, 184, 190.

[36] Compare Michael H. Mitias, who distinguishes four types of feeling: emotion, idea, image, and sensation; Mitias 1988, 30. An insufficient understanding of feeling is probably a reason why expression has been such a problem for aesthetics.

[37] Dickie 1974, 198.

[38] Dickie 1974, 200. Allen Carlson has pursued this line; see Carlson 1979, 1981, 1995.

[39] For some landscapes, conventions exist; compare Sepänmaa 1994, 13-59.

[40] Various dimensions of heterogeneity are presented in chapter three.

[41] Mitias 1988, 52-3, 3, 18, 30, 118.

[42] Mitias 1988, 6-8.

[43] Mitias 1988, 71, 74. Compare Merleau-Ponty's descriptions of the sexual dimensi-

on as our affective environment, noted in chapter one, third section.

[44] Mitias 1988, 146-8.

[45] Mitias 1988, 148.

[46] For a refutation of this view, see Dickie 1987.

[47] For a historical overview of disinterestedness, see Stolnitz 1961. The notion originates with the British empiricists - Shaftesbury used the concept to describe ideal friendship (Shaftesbury 1964) - but it is Kant who states that interest in the existence of the thing is banned from aesthetic judgement; Kant 1990, 40-41. As Paul Crowther points out, disinterestedness is for Kant a logical, not a psychological characteristic of aesthetic judgements; Crowther 1996, 111.

[48] Compare chapter one, first section; also Mazis 1993, 132: "The 'activity' of the person as e-motional cognizer is trusting."

[49] Note also Eugene C. Hargrove's argument that the real existence of an object is relevant to aesthetic appreciation even in cases where the object is present only through a representation; Hargrove 1989, 168-170; compare 203. "The representation then becomes the focus for the act of aesthetic appreciation, but not its object," 169.

[50] Compare Sallis 1994, 80-116; Johnson 1989; Warnock 1987; also chapter three, second section.

[51] Stolnitz 1960, 35.

[52] Stolnitz 1960, 42. I shall not discuss Stolnitz' other criteria of aesthetic experience: the isolation of the object in space and time and the intrinsic value of the experience. On the former, see Stolnitz 1960, 35, 52, 65 and 1986, 36-39; on the latter, Stolnitz 1960, 43.

[53] Stolnitz 1986, 35, compare 27; see also Brady 1995 and 1998.

[54] Stolnitz 1986, 36, also 39.

[55] Stolnitz 1960, 58, 63.

[56] Stolnitz 1986, 37-38.

[57] Dickie 1987, 107. The examples he refers to are poems.

[58] Dickie 1987, 103-105.

[59] Carlson 1993a, 203.

[60] Compare Margolis 1987, 8. The analytic tradition has cleansed aesthetics of many fuzzy concepts, but sometimes thrown out the baby with the bathwater.

[61] Carlson has developed his model over the years, see Carlson 1979, 1981, 1993a, 1995. In the 1993a article he draws on Stolnitz, but offers a broader account of aesthetic relevance.

[62] Carlson 1993a, 219.

[63] Hepburn 1990, 196; see also Hepburn 1984, 75-107.

[64] Hepburn 1990, 193; compare 191-193; on subjectivity and objectivity also Searle 1992 and Rolston 1994, 192-197.

[65] Berleant 1991, 11-15; 1994a, 249; 1994b, 238, 242-244.

[66] Berleant 1991, 16, 44, 48; see also 1992, 119 and 1994b, 249-251.

[67] Berleant 1991, 12.

[68] This mirrors two important notions of love: *eros* and *agape*.

[69] See Sircello 1989, note 5, 212-215, for a discussion of the history of this connection and its denial in the Enlightenment, of which we still, with some exceptions (Murdoch 1989/1970, is one), are the heirs.

[70] Sircello 1989, 59. Sircello is aware of possible phenomenological features of his enterprise but confesses unfamiliarity with the tradition; Sircello 1989, 225.

[71] Sircello 1989, 26.

[72] Sircello 1989, 94-107.

[73] Sircello 1989, 119, 162. In the later passage Sircello reflects on what falls under "the technical term 'Love'". I agree with the suggestion that we love not only other persons but also, for example, books, art or virtues, and would like to add at least places and animals.

[74] Sircello 1989, 123-125.

[75] Sircello 1989, 193-194; compare notes 80, 245-246 and 5, 212-215.

[76] Sircello 1989, 157-158. However, he points out that the theory is not normative as such, 129.

[77] Levinas 1994/1961, 22-23; see also Levinas 1992/1986, 22-23, 169

[78] Compare Carlson 1993b, 222-223.

[79] Murdoch 1989, 34. Her understanding of 'attention' draws on Simone Weil.

[80] On 'wonder', see Hepburn 1984, 131-154.

[82] Baensch 1961, 24.

[83] Compare Levinas 1987, 13 and Baensch 1961, 34. They agree on the status of the work of art as separated from the flow of life, but for Levinas this is true only for the work as an object, which in experience has to be "treated as a myth (...) put in movement and made to speak".

[84] Warnock 1987, 100; compare Warnock 1976 and Scruton 1974.

[85] For examples, see Stolnitz 1960, 58.

[86] Stolnitz 1986, 43.

[87] Drawing on Levinas, as noted above.

[88] Compare Sircello 1989, 189-191.

[89] Carlson 1979, 271, and 1981, 24.

[90] Stolnitz, 1961, 133, describing Shaftesbury's view; compare Levinas 1992/1986, 10, 99

[91] Searle 1992, 83-84 and *passim*.

[92] Kristeva 1994, 336.

[93] Sircello's expansion experiences are relevant here, as is his criticism of "the Disneyland conception of enjoyment"; Sircello 1989, 56-116, 136-8; compare also Sartwell 1996.

[94] Merleau-Ponty 1992/1945, 361, 376.

[95] Heidegger, whose ideas I discuss later in this section, seems to belong to this tradition.

[96] Hepburn 1990, 197.

[97] I discuss some possible meanings of 'the real' in chapter five, first section; for a discussion of its relation to aesthetic experience, see Dufrenne 1992/1953, 613-677.

[98] Osborne 1981, 10.

[99] Osborne 1978, 309; on the same page he notes that cultural values are "attendant on the cultivation and exercise of human faculties for their own sake".

[100] Osborne 1978, 309-311.

[101] Osborne 1978, 307-308. See also the criticism of a society dominated by technology in Osborne 1977a, 47-48 and 1977b, 138-144.

[102] Osborne 1986, 138. The general idea seems related to the role of 'breathing spaces' in domestic environments, see Horelli-Kukkonen 1993, 149-157.

[103] Csikszentmihalyi and Robinson 1990, 183, 183-188.

[104] Csikszentmihalyi and Robinson, 1990, 178; see also 7-8, 92-95, 179.

[105] Compare Sircello, who argues that imperfection in itself is never the object of love; Sircello 1989, note 75, 242-243.

[106] For a general presentation of epiphany in Aquinas and Joyce, see Collinson 1992, 120-125.

[107] Joyce 1982/1944, 188-190.

[108] Joyce 1989/1916, 193. Compare Neil Campbell's interpretation of Aquinas: "*claritas* should be understood as the *form* of the thing shining through or making itself perspicuous or known"; Campbell 1996, 167.

[109] Crowther 1993, 41, 44.

[110] Heidegger 1949/1927, 219-230; on art, 1972, 29-65; on poetry and language, 1971/1959. In the present discussion, I concentrate on the later work, which is more directly related to aesthetics.

[111] Sallis 1994, 43.

[112] See, for example, in Heidegger 1971/1959, 174-176, 180-186.

[113] Sallis 1995, 33. Sallis also shows how the truth in Heidegger is linked to his reflections on how things already exist for us through our practical concerns; Sallis 1995, 57-70.

[114] These are discussed in "Der Ursprung des Kunstwerkes", Heidegger 1972; the most relevant passages for my discussion are on pp. 30-44.

[115] Heidegger 1972, 44.

[116] Sallis 1994, 70. This observation is pertinent to symbolic architecture, discussed in the first sections of chapters six and seven below.

[117] Crowther 1993, 44.

[118] Crowther points in this direction in another context; compare chapter four, fourth section, below. If *aletheia* is understood as not (yet) truth, but as the ground for truth - as in a late interpretation of Heidegger himself - then the notion *could* provide space for the concreteness of existence; Sallis 1995, 69.

[119] Joyce 1989/1916, 187, 189.

[120] Greimas 1987, 23-33.

[121] Greimas 1987, 31.

[122] Greimas 1987, 92.

[123] Levinas 1992/1986, 181.

[124] Greimas 1987, 92.

[125] Compare George Simmel, who argues that the functional detail of the vase mediates between 'art' and 'the world'; Simmel 1923, 126-134.

[126] Kant 1990/1790, 41.

[127] Ferry 1996, 19.

[128] Critchley 1992, 216.

[129] Compare Deleuze and Guattari, 1994, and Buchler, 1966.

[130] This term is used by both Merleau-Ponty and Levinas; Merleau-Ponty 1991/1964, 322, 281, 284, 289, see also 1996/1960, 88-89; Levinas 1992/1986.

[131] See chapter one; also Berleant 1992, 14-20.

[132] Compare Dufrenne, 1992/1953, who underlines the temporal and spatial aspects of all art.

[133] It is emphasized also in Levinas' description of the unrest and openness in the desire for the other: "[a]ffection, but without touch, affectivity"; Levinas 1992/1986, 184.

[134] Langer 1953, 40; Dufrenne 1991, 71.

[135] Dufrenne 1991, 11. Compare Greimas 1987, 40-41, who presents intimacy as a feature of *esthésis*.

[136] Dufrenne 1991, 96, 100. Compare Merleau-Ponty 1996/1960, 49-104; also Engdahl 1994.

[137] Anonymous Chinese, quoted in Dufrenne 1991, 178.

[138] Dufrenne 1991, 164.

[139] For a similar understanding of sensitivity, as opposed to sensuousness and including the ethical element of awareness of the other, see Vasseleu 1998, 83.

[140] Compare, on atmosphere, chapter four first section. For a discussion of the connection between ethical and aesthetic value, see Eaton 1989, 152-179.

[141] Merleau-Ponty 1992/1945, 180.

[142] Merleau-Ponty 1991/1964, 294-295.

[143] Compare Welsch's descriptions of *aisthésis*, for example 1995/1990, 9-40, and 1996, 106-134 (in English, 1997, 60-77).

[144] Compare the two first sections in chapter four below.

[145] Discussed in the third section of chapter five.

[146] Noschis 1990, 85.

[147] Greimas and Fontanille 1991, 12, 25, 61, 185. The aesthetic and the emotional dimension are described as close but opposite, since where the emotional seems to be directed towards articulation, the aesthetic looks backwards, as if yearning for a lost unity. This psychoanalytically tinged hierarchy of mental attitudes is not very helpful for understanding human life in its concreteness. *Ibid.*, 30-31, see also 29, 151, 270.

[148] This character may be caused by chance and not representative. For example, a person who visits Helsinki on the last day of April, without familiarity with local custom, gets a very odd impression of the city and its inhabitants.

[149] This is how Mary Warnock explains Jean-Paul Sartre's view of imagination; Warnock 1976, 181.

[150] Warnock 1994, 70; compare Warnock 1976, 151 and 192 for similar points. On the assimilation of knowledge and truth in imaginative perception, see Hepburn 1984, 29-31.

[151] Dufrenne 1992/1953, 446.

[152] Scruton 1980, 77.

[153] Scruton 1980, 79, 83. Imagination is also discussed in Scruton 1974, 84-133.

[154] Compare Polanyi 1958, 347-380, who emphasizes the similarities in all animal cognition. Also Searle contests the proposed radical difference between human and animal consciousness; Searle 1992, 83-109.

[155] Scruton 1980, 79, 81.

[156] Scruton 1980, 83.

[157] Warnock 1976, 10, points out the presence of an imaginative component in all perception, which is thus more or less ordinary or inventive.

[158] Scruton 1980, 83.

[159] Compare Merleau-Ponty 1995/1969.

[160] Warnock 1970, 330.

[161] Compare also chapter five below, sections three and four.

[162] Warnock 1976, 79.

[163] Warnock 1976, 82, 87.

[164] Hepburn 1984, 72, 6.

[165] Merleau-Ponty 1996/1960, 97.

[166] Hepburn 1993, 79, 73.

[167] Warnock 1976, 89.

[168] Kant 1990/1790, 69-72 (par. 16).

[169] Hepburn 1993, 69.

[170] Compare Polanyi's argument that there is a tacit or personal component of all knowledge, noted above; also Merleau-Ponty 1995/1969, 170-171.

[171] The original Greek sense of *ethos* includes dwelling, habitation and place; Casey 1993, 265, 277; Kearney 1995, xiii.

[172] Compare the discussion of experience in the Introduction.

[173] In "On Intersubjectivity: Notes on Merleau-Ponty" Levinas observes that there is a neglect of the other if sociality is seen as arising directly from sensuous existence; Levinas 1993, 99-103.

[175] For a discussion of response and responsibility in Derrida (inspired by Levinas), see Kearney 1995, 173-177.

[176] On unity, see Hepburn 1984, 18-23.

[177] Levinas 1992/1986, 52, compare 144-145. I have translated *au monde* as 'for the world', compare also chapter one.

[178] Merleau-Ponty 1991/1964, 193, 247. Compare, however, the suggestion in Merleau-Ponty 1992/1945, 317, that there are "phenomena before being (...) which have meaning, even if they are not yet thematized."

[179] Merleau-Ponty 1991/1964, 253-4. Brute and wild refer to the 'untamed' state of what is not articulated and conceptualized.

[180] Levinas 1987, 148-9.

[181] Levinas 1994/1961, 303-318 and 1996/1978, 220-238.

[182] Levinas 1996/1978, 83, 181, 220-222.

[183] Levinas 1996/1978, 183, 232.

[184] Levinas 1996/1978, for example 223, 283. Compare this note on time as waiting: "patience, more passive than any passivity correlative to acts", Levinas 1992/1986, 87.

[185] Levinas 1992/1986, 59.

[186] Compare Levinas 1992/1986, 110-111.

[187] Levinas 1996/1978, 231. Compare Merleau-Ponty's infinite: "infini d'*Offenheit* et non pas *Unendlichkeit* - Infini du *Lebenswelt* et non pas infini d'idéalisation", Merleau-Ponty 1991/1964, 223.

[188] Levinas 1993/1991, 228-229.

[189] Compare Merleau-Ponty 1991/1964, 209, 253-4.

[190] Levinas 1996/1982, 71-2, also 1992/1986, 169 or 207. The emphasis in Hepburn's 'wonder' is similar: cognition is made to halt. Compare also Ferry 1996, 247.

[191] Merleau-Ponty 1996/1960, 88-91. In his notes for *Le visible et l'invisible*, Merleau-Ponty presents the vertical as a feature of the chiasmatic relation; Merleau-Ponty 1991/1964, 281, 284, 289, 322.

[192] Merleau-Ponty 1996/1960, 91.

[193] On the innocence of aesthetic experience, see Dufrenne 1992/1953, 675-676. Innocence is not a generalizable ideal: to deny experience can be to deny responsibility, even to oneself. See also McWhorter's defence and Kearney's critique of Heideggerian innocence; McWhorter 1992a; Kearney 1995, 50-64.

[194] Levinas 1993/1963; compare Levinas 1994/1961, 142-149, for a differently focused discussion of sensibility and the everyday.

PART TWO

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

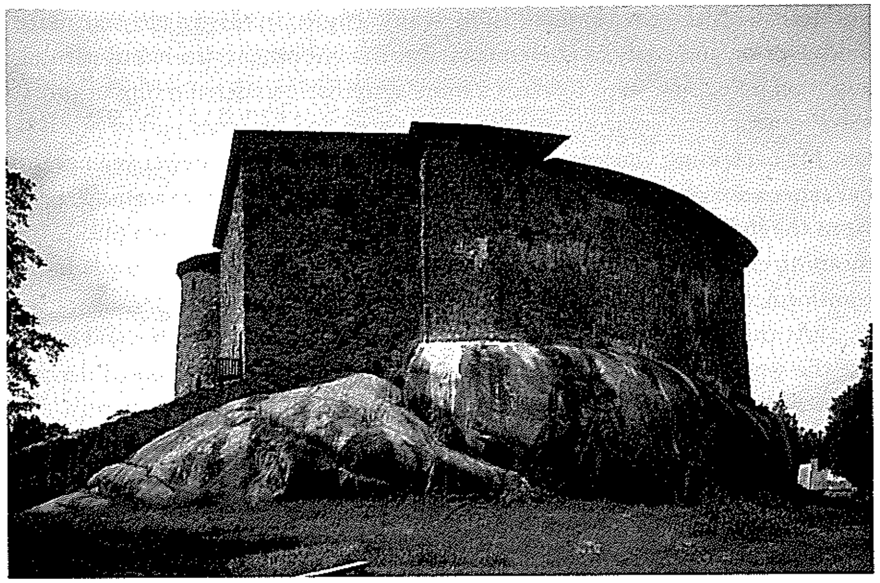
It is at the level of the interference of many practices that things happen, beings, images, concepts, all the kinds of events.[1]

So far, I have discussed the experiential interaction between humans and environment and the place of aesthetic experience in this regard, but I have not dealt with the environment itself at any length. In this part, I start with a description and analysis of elements of the environment, built and natural, and then take some steps towards a more systematic understanding of the ways in which the environment is appropriated and becomes part of our lives. My overriding concern is to illuminate the interrelations between personal experience and collective, historical and political strata of meaning, between the individual and social and political public life. How does public meaning enter subjective experience and become part of it, and how is it transformed in practical, cognitive and imaginative processes?

At this point I owe the reader a clarification of how I understand and use the words 'meaning', 'sense' and 'significance'[2]. In chapter one, I described ways in which human beings relate to their material environment, broadly understood as comprising buildings, things, natural elements and other people. Based on discussion, it may be suggested that human existence is by nature relating, which means that even in moments of mere lingering, space can be richly felt. But this is not necessarily so, sometimes because of the unwelcoming character of the environment. In such a case, one can say that the environment is alienating, inhuman, or lacks meaning.

To be more precise, I shall use the term 'meaning' to refer to articulated or historically based referents or complexes of referents of buildings, built complexes or areas. That the built environment has meaning implies that it has a history, that it has been used in certain ways and serves cultural - practical or symbolic - purposes. 'Meaning' refers to what is culturally mediated and established or could be so established. However, it is important to note that to experience a square as having meaning does not imply that one knows its history or present use very well: it is enough to be convinced that the square has some or a particular role in culture. That meaning is cultural and can be verbally articulated further implies that it makes sense to reflect upon the meaning of a building but not upon the meaning of a mountain, unless that mountain, like *Mont Saint-Victoire* or Mount Fuji, has had a role in culture.

Meaning belongs to an object: the object *has* meaning. In the environment this object need not be a single building or place, it can also be a larger complex or environment. Here we encounter a slightly different use of 'meaning', related to comprehensibility rather than to particular contents.



permanence The castle Raseborg (14th century). MFA, photo Kari Hakli

This may be referred to as 'meaningfulness'. In a meaningful built complex or structure the emphasis is typically on relations and continuity between the parts, on clarity or transparency of form. However, this is not to say that meaningfulness is only a formal characteristic of the built environment. It also has to do with contents: with how life is organized and takes place, with how history is acknowledged, or with how the relations between urban and rural land or the urban and the natural environment are structured, to mention only a few examples. In any particular environment there is interdependence between the meaning of separate built objects and the meaningfulness of complexes. The meaningful built environment facilitates orientation and action and supports human activities by making it easier to understand where one stands geographically, politically, socially and existentially. In a meaningful environment one can therefore expect that meaning will be generated more richly.

In addition to meaning and meaningfulness I have used the related term 'sense'. To speak of sense does not imply that there is, even in principle, a specific sense which could be articulated as a particular meaning or reference. Sense is closer to directionality, to qualities and to what is felt. It is relative to the experiencer although not constituted by him alone. Earlier I pointed out three semantic strata of the term as it is understood in the phenomenological frame: sense as sensation, sense as meaning, and sense as direction[3]. All these are relevant here as well. These strata are aspects of the experience and even existence of a situated subject who exists in a relation of sense to the environment. It is only as relative to such a subject that things, the environment or the world *make* sense or fail to do so[4].

To find oneself in an environment which makes little sense implies more than a lack of particular knowledge; more radically, it implies a loss of position and orientation, of the sense that one stands in a real environment with a sense of direction. An environment that does not make sense is one in which one loses both the sense of place and the sense of self. An environment rich in sense is easy to relate to, which does not necessarily imply practical activities[5]. Materials, stylistic or formal aspects, temporal depth, the scale of buildings, the paces and modes of movement and change and the rhythms of urban life are factors which may create sense or its opposite, alienation. Richness of sense is, like meaningfulness, conducive to meaning, for an environment which receives and welcomes a human being will probably be better remembered and enriched in memory over time than one which is felt to turn its back on us.

In distinction to meaning and meaningfulness, richness of sense can characterize a natural environment which has not been integrated into a culture. This is true especially if the experiencer is familiar with that type of environment: a kind of forest or plain, or the sea. It is also important to note that while sense does not exist independently from an experiencer, it can in the environment be based in other than human life forms. For example, the sleepless, both invigorated and tired human being can relate to the passionate singing (even noise) of small birds in the North during the white nights in May and June in an immediate way, without any act of interpretation. Birds and humans alike are subjected to the generous and ruthless overflow of light. In one way sense is universally recognizable, which is not to say that its elements may be decoded correctly, but then decoding is also beside the point.

If a discussion of meaning is focused on what is articulated and thus given in the environment, a discussion of sense is focused on experience and situation. But this means neither simply that meaning is precise and sense imprecise, nor that the two can be kept separate in concrete situations. There are indeed overlappings and interactions between meaning and sense. Think, for example, of the forgetfulness through which precise meaning becomes general sense in a ruin whose origin is unknown to us. In the opposite direction, a natural place which is experienced to be rich in sense may be appropriated and acquire meaning through becoming a cult place and a place of culture.

In this part of the study I deal with questions related to the meaning and sense of the built environment, for which I also use the encompassing term 'significance'. Cultural practices, from construction and management to dwelling, are no doubt central in the process of coming to terms with an environment. In addition to this there is another side to the environment and our experience of it, namely the unintended and unplanned, which constitutes background and support for human life and culture. In chapter three, which takes up ontological questions of environment and building, I place a great emphasis on the processual and heterogeneous character of natural and built spaces. Many enriching aspects and elements of the environment exist or disappear independently of individual human contributions and intentions in the present. I argue that to see the environment as a developing and changing, if also persisting and, in many ways, heterogeneous whole is preferable to seeing it as a set of objects created at and relative to particular moments. The processual approach to the built environment is more fruitful from both the pragmatic and the aesthetic point of view and also more true to how the world is.

In chapter four, I take up several complementary perspectives on the meaning and significance of the built environment, which is now approached as architecture, with an emphasis on the expression and articulation of cultural ideas, ideals and practices. However, the discussion is also from the street side of experience, where buildings and built spaces appear and address citizens without always speaking very clearly or being understood according to the intentions, with which they were created. It is not irrelevant to compare the disposition of this chapter to that of chapter one, for atmosphere, expression, and the different functions performed by buildings relate in relevant ways to the affective, practical-cognitive and ethical dimensions of existence. In the present discussion however, social and public matters, rather than individual experience, come to the fore. How we build

influences our conceptions of political and social institutions, such as parliament, school, or home, and thereby also influences our view of ourselves as citizens and human beings. I illustrate these relations in a final section of the chapter, which deals with the appearance and cultural constitution of functional types of urban areas.

In chapter five, I elaborate on ideas from earlier chapters on a more theoretical level. The individuation and articulation of environment at large into a recognized and appropriated habitat is a central theme. This takes place on the basis of a presumed general environment, a reality or 'real', which is the material and basis of individuation. However, constant returns and departures between a more unarticulated reality and a sense of place or an environmental image seem to characterize our cultural intercourse with the environment. The materials of symbolic placemaking are themselves culturally mediated. To experience a human habitat on the spot is to be in a particular location but, other than that, the situation is dynamic and changing rather than static or identical to itself.

Chapter three

A PROCESSUAL APPROACH

> *individuality, whether of a person or an object, is always interactive and historical*[6]

The significance of the built environment does not inhere in its made components only. Culture and nature, the cognitive and the sensuous, the individual and the social, the self and the world are linked in experience. The elements of the habitat are legion and of different sorts. Partly for this reason, the built environment appears to us as largely anonymous - without name - although we are related to it through inhabiting and acting in it. Anonymity does not imply that we do not recognize features of some buildings or people or that we might feel alien. We are present with the environment and its elements without constantly interrogating it. We are present to the environment, but we may also be absent from it, even while others observe us to be there.

The multiplicity, rather than oneness, of any concrete, experienced environment is due not only to features of the environment, but also to the multitude of experiencers. We inhabit the world in different ways, from different situations and homes. In this chapter I concentrate, however, on features of the environment itself which make it multiple and changing. These are due to the impact of nature, of temporal processes which are independent of human intentions, as well as to the diversity of human life. Together these influences can create a situation which is rich in sense but resists straightforward interpretations or reduction into a particular or essential meaning. For this reason, not only the environment as a whole but also single buildings often fit badly with traditional definitions of art. Still the art perspective, which I discuss in a first section, activates imaginative perception and might thus reach beyond what was intentionally expressed. To see the built environment in terms of art can complement the approach of environmental aesthetics also because it gives tools for more precise analysis and perception.

In other sections, I describe the natural and cultural conditions which create environmental multiplicity and richness. The experienced thickness or opacity of the environment as well as its transcendence (which I return to in chapter five) - that it resists reductive interpretation through being both mute and more - are grounded in these features. Time and history, nature and culture, unplanned and planned may be used as distinctions, but it is important to note that they do not create a divide between human beings and the rest of the world. As argued in chapter one, the human being is actively engaged in the world and passively subject to it, creator and creature. Already for this reason, it would be wise to include the unplanned and unintended as important elements in discussions of environmental aesthetics. In

addition, reflections on the basic temporality of the environment are relevant for our views on restoration and conservation. If the environment is in constant change, this increases not only the freedom, but also, since it is a situated freedom, the responsibility of the planner or builder.

In a discussion of space and place I point to an additional reason - compared to temporality - for the multiplicity of environments, namely the relativity of spatial boundaries. There is no absolutely given centre of the environment; buildings extend their influence on their surroundings, and functional conditions may decide what is inside and what is outside. However, the situated experiencer provides a point of departure. Therefore experienced rather than objective space and place are important, although relative, tools for analysis. In addition, to describe a place and its characteristics, more precise perspectives are needed. The discussion of permanence and of the different forms of change - processual, rhythmic, situational - that can be detected in an environment is a step in this direction.

The approach described in this chapter is openly normative: it argues for building, planning and management which respect the site and acknowledge the needs and ideals of the present social and cultural situation. This ideal might be described on the basis of Heideggerian 'dwelling' which, I argue, is possible only if we take heed of the interaction between nonhuman nature and human culture and attempt a life-supporting balance between these.

Art and architecture

How we see the built environment in an aesthetic framework is partly dependent on whether we think that buildings are better treated in environmental aesthetics or in the philosophy of art. But if the environment is heterogeneous and multifaceted, as I shall try to show here and in later chapters, it may be important to apply many perspectives. In this first section, which is firmly seated in aesthetics, I start with the assumption that contemporary environmental aesthetics is a most fruitful philosophical approach to the human habitat and the built environment. But it far from covers everything, and I shall indicate some points it does not deal with. The art perspective is complementary and helpful in articulating some of these questions and answers, although it is often awkward to see a building as a work of art, at least with regard to established definitions. To see building as an art nevertheless offers fruitful perspectives, since it calls attention to expressive features and to the production and reproduction of meaning, even to the point of being generative of meaning. But the art perspective may also be counterproductive to environmental meaning and sense. This happens when and if it presents an unrealistic ideal of the building as a finished and self-enclosed whole.

If one is interested in the everyday experience of the built environment, environmental aesthetics is useful basically since it does not deny but, on the contrary, problematizes the relation of subject and object and their interdependence[7]. But when one wants to move beyond the undeniably central theme of aesthetic experience or appreciation, towards more specific questions, there is not so much to get from it. As a philosophical discipline, environmental aesthetics often remains on an abstract level. One of the questions it leaves largely unanswered is the character of particular environments. Having rightly criticized earlier landscape aesthetics for a too static view of both perceiver and environment, environmental aesthetics has not developed an alternative as to how and why landscapes or areas become experienced as entities with a particular identity or genius: as places. One reason may be that a large portion of the work in environmental aesthetics has so far been occupied with clearing the ground for the discipline. Another might be the emphasis on the interaction, even fusion of subject and environment in experience, which may conceal the character of place as a given, particular environment[8]. A third reason is apparently that environmental aesthetics for the most part has dealt with the natural environment, where we usually do not stumble over embodied intentions of other human beings.

On this point, in questions related to cultural meaning, our understanding of the built environment clearly benefits from the philosophy of art. As an object of experience, the built environment, compared to a work of art, is less unified but equally complicated. The separate elements of the built environment are usually embedded in several cultural contexts; contexts that constitute or are at least co-productive with the object. At this point, I would like to observe that art, as a framework for experiencing the built environment, is more synthetic and encompassing than, for example, religion, politics or sports. Science, law or transportation define a university building, a law court and a railway station. Art exists on this level as well, as a functional context and content of art museums and galleries. But 'art', as part of 'the art of building' specifies no content; it only makes us more perceptive, prompts us to see, move and reflect.

The philosophy of art offers theoretical perspectives on the significance of cultural artefacts, but as applied to everyday reality 'art' can generate or fuel a creative sensitivity. To see something as art or to recommend that it be seen in this way is to activate the aesthetic and expressive potential of the object, which is actualized only in a perceptual encounter. "When something is regarded a work of art, it becomes an object of interpretation."[9] To Arthur Danto, there is not necessarily any other difference between an ordinary object and a work of art than the difference in status, in how the objects are seen, which is due to the tradition in which the object is created (the 'art world'). Danto's idea is not as such applicable to buildings. But I propose that 'art' can function as an activating perspective, hypothetically, tentatively, without changing or adding any features, only making us perceive what is potentially there.

Another way of claiming that something is art is to define the art-making features as perceptual features, without regard for how the object was

created. Mara Miller suggests, following Susanne K. Langer, that art is characterized by an "excess of form", which is interesting and potentially rewarding[10]. Therefore 'the garden as an art' means something more than considering gardens as if they were art; to Miller, gardens actually are art, and sometimes great art. Her view allows us to call and regard as art creations that were made irrespective of the existence of an art world in that culture. The art-making features are perceptible, if also dependent on cultural meaning.[11]

In both Danto and Miller, 'art' points to resources of meaning and value, but there is a difference in how they locate these. Miller does not presume that the object acquires new and different features in the context of art; art does not introduce a different content, it only intensifies and highlights elements that are already with the object. In comparison, for Danto the art object is always fundamentally different from "the commonplace", and the difference is not only about being perceived in a certain way, but includes immaterial features which constitute the object[12]. If Danto's view is illuminating with regard to modern art, especially of the twentieth century, it is problematic as applied to architecture. Also as an art, architecture is intimately connected to various practices and contexts, so that if we regard it as more than construction and include some idea of sheltering, we immediately have to do with social ideas. There is perhaps an art world tradition in building, but it has not been dominant[13]. The philosophical ideas of architecture as pure art have remained interesting curiosities, and when architects tried this approach it led them to functionalism, suggesting that, essentially, architecture is connected to the organization of human life. It is also hard to find examples of nonfunctional buildings, perhaps with the exception of Ludwig Mies van der Rohe's *Barcelona Pavilion*.

Another difference between Miller and Danto is that Miller's view - and this goes for any application of art outside institutional art - is evaluative. But this is not necessarily a shortcoming; on the contrary, it can be argued that the indication of values is an important point of regarding something as art; art is inevitably an evaluative notion[14]. When the object is a building, the point of looking at it as art is that it helps us to focus on and find interesting, expressive or revealing features which may or may not enhance its excellence. Only in this way is it true that 'art' adds to the object, that it introduces elements that were not there before, but in this it does not differ from sensitive and creative perception in general. It may finally be noted that to understand art, or the aesthetic, as an intensification of our relation to the world in particular instances, is common in certain versions of philosophy of art, where the creation of art is seen as a basic human mode of articulating a relationship with the world. If art, as Langer suggests, articulates styles of feeling which may be proper to an epoch, it is an important praxis with regard to the formation of the subject and to society in certain of its aspects[15].

But the Romantic idea of art as articulation of subjective experience, or expression, as is the more common term, is also particularly problematic for building, since it tends to turn away from material reality. In German idealism, for example, the dualism of mind and matter, paralleled by freedom and necessity, lead to views of architecture as the first but also the most bound to its materials of the art forms or as, in essence, frozen music[16]. Given that kind of aesthetic approach, "architecture will never manage to become as respectable as painting or sculpture"[17]. The art perspective also often overlooks fundamental and inevitable features of the built environment that are related, for example, to the articulation of political structures and social relations, or the mediation of human culture and nonhuman nature. One finds the view that architecture is an art only when it differs from ordinary building, combined with an emphasis on its relevance for human life[18]. This may be seen as an echo of the role of art in Western societies from the end of the eighteenth century on, where it has been allotted the sphere of individual expression and feeling, which may include social criticism, but only as presented in the specific spaces which separate art from the spheres of everyday life. The view of aesthetics as the realm of the unreal and of escape from everyday life is not without historical foundation, however distortive it is[19]. In philosophy of art from Romanticism to our days expression, emotion, and experience have been central themes, accompanied by the attempt to purify the notions of art and the aesthetic and to show how they differ from other phenomena and practices. Artists have repeatedly and constantly reacted against this development, which is not surprising, taken that the worship of art is simultaneously a marginalization of art[20]. Art is then not only separated from the supposed humdrum, but at the same time from the fields of politics and actual social interaction.

The problems with the art perspective are not peculiar to architecture but are, rather, due to a tendency towards abstraction and idealization, which in its most extreme forms, gave rise to the "search for purity" in modern art[21]. The idea that art, or art forms, or individual works of art must have an identity that is somehow unchanging, that can be circumscribed and defined, is symptomatic of this kind of thinking. The identity of the work of art is often tied to a particular moment in history and to the idea of the artist, who is taken to be a more or less autonomous creator. In architecture, functionalism stated the dependence of design on constructional and practical matters, thus opposing conceptions of architecture as a free or liberal art. Indeed, architectural creation is seldom, if ever, totally free. But this may be true, if in less evident and thoroughgoing ways, of the other arts as well. Artistic creation may never be totally free and independent, for in each situation, it is dependent on traditions and ideas, stylistic, expressive, and physical materials as well as more tangible materials and tools[22]. Some cultural practices are more dependent on cooperation or financial and technical support than others, but for any socially significant practice, there must be at least a minimum of approval, a preparedness to receive, before a piece can be presented.

One still dominant perspective on buildings as works of art is what I call the 'art historical model'[23]. This model represents a kind of approach which is influential in building conservation, although it may not answer to the present state of architectural history. The central idea is that the identity of the work is relative to its original or intended state, usually at the moment of creation. The original state, if it is described in any purity, is, however, often an idealization which does not correspond to the actual historical situation. If this model has been criticized, it also finds support: in the discussions surrounding the cladding of the *Finlandia Hall*, by Alvar Aalto, in Helsinki, the architects's supposed intentions were often drawn on, and in the discussion around the rehabilitation of housing areas from the 1960s and 1970s similar arguments have been presented. A practical problem with the art historical perspective is that it is unable to respond to the practices of building and to the thickness of the context in which every building is embedded. It becomes, by necessity, abstract. The main problem with this model is not that it complicates matters but, on the contrary, that it simplifies the actual complexity of human habitats and misses important aspects related to the quality of life and the spectrum of aesthetic appreciation.

In the following sections, I shall try to indicate that a view which allows for the processual character of building, for change, for chance, for the embeddedness of architecture in other contexts, for the influence of the unintended on the work of architecture, is more illuminating. Architecture must be understood in the plural. Further, whether architecture should be defined as an art is not the main concern if the challenge is to gain a better understanding of the appreciation of architecture as a central part of the human habitat. As a suggestion or description, rather than a definition, a perspective of the 'art of building' may be more useful than 'architecture as an art'. The former points to the different ways in which building may be skilfully realized, performed with art, so that the result is an environment which provides room for pleasant, rich, even excellent experiences.

Time and history

The temporal and historical layering of such human environments as cities or villages is a well-known and appreciated feature, long noted in urban and historical studies. Cities are typically not built at one time, but built and rebuilt in an ongoing process. If this is acknowledged for large urban or rural complexes, it is much less so for buildings. As noted above, there is a tendency to look for an ideal moment in the history of a building, a moment that could become the point of reference for what the building 'is' and which would be useful for deciding about its restoration. But this is problematic, ontologically and from the point of design, construction and criticism. I shall argue here for an alternative view, with both ontological claims and critical and practical relevance.

Two dimensions of the influence of time on buildings should be distinguished. I shall call them the time of nature, or natural time, and the time of culture, or historical time. It must be emphasized that these notions do not aspire to define either nature or history generally, only to illuminate changes that take place in the environment as of themselves, on the one hand, or that are made intentionally, on the other.[24]

Humans and human artefacts are exposed to the time of nature; time works on us and through us. Natural time influences buildings from within, without the involvement of human intentions; it is a gradual, often invisible and undivided unfolding. Weathering, as the interaction between climate, materials and built structures belongs to natural time, as does the growing of lichens or weeds on and between houses[25]. The influence of life on buildings is a temporal phenomenon, and in its nonhuman forms life unambiguously belongs with natural time. But when it comes to certain forms of human influence on the built environment, we arrive at a boundary area. The imprints of human bodies on buildings, or the traces of human activities on streets, the wear and tear, appear to be close to natural time. A building may have sunken into the street during a time of hundred years or more: that belongs with natural time. The sunkenness of the sidewalk beside it is caused by human use and climate together: also that would belong with natural time - but it also belongs to culture. Human life is cultural through and through, but this does not mean that it is not based on conditions which are given before culture. That is, we are not born to bodies, but with bodies: there are dimensions of life which are basically given, although mediated by culture.

Historical time appears in the built environment as the intentional expressions of particular moments, epochs, events and periods. The time of culture is related to human actions, to the understanding that a particular society or culture has of itself, where the gradual unfolding of time must be ordered, time counted and divided[26]. This time is marked and recorded in written documents, but also directly marked in the physical environment. Monuments apparently belong here, but so do town plans, streets and buildings. The built environment and the activity of building are among the most important ways for a society to present, affirm and maintain itself. Closely connected to the physical transformation of the environment is the naming and renaming of buildings and places[27]. The orientation which these activities establish is geographical, historical and political: it situates the community in space and time and gives it a sense of direction. In addition, if we accept that space and time are always relative to an observer, the articulation performed in constructing and naming the environments contribute to the creation of human space and time.

Historical time is expressed in buildings as formal intentions, which we can recognize as styles. In addition, there is the impact of historical events, which may become important parts of the habitat even when they are barely perceptible. On the Long Bridge in Helsinki, there are marks of bullets from the events of 1918 (sometimes referred to as the Civil War,

sometimes as the War of Independence): when one walks over the bridge they cannot be seen, and it is probably seldom that anyone thinks of this. Nevertheless, when reminded of them, they are suddenly very much there. There are also less precise ways in which culture manifests itself in the built environment, as, for example, the allusions and continuous reworking of tradition in vernacular building. Particularly in this context, the origin of an element may be less important than its reuse, which can be based on misunderstanding. Thus historical time, as it appears and as it is articulated, contains obscurity, even obfuscation. In this, not just in continuity, it approaches the workings of nature. But while the elements of buildings may resonate of earlier times, their primary context of meaning is the present.[28]

The distinction of time and history may be relative and imprecise - when closely looked upon - but it nevertheless suggests two equally important contexts of building: nature and culture. One might situate the material dimension of architecture with time and the formal and symbolical with history; the unintended, unconscious with nature, the intended and conscious with history. This is certainly a working strategy and in line with our general patterns of thinking, but it is useful to remember that actual environments tend to resist neat divisions. In the environment, more interesting than the division is the interdependence of nature and culture, which should make us attentive to but cautious about the distinction. In the following reflections on temporal relations in the built environment, I move with both time and history.

In architectural theory, Aldo Rossi's analysis of building as object and process, individual creation and social process, which he first presented in 1966, is still among the most illuminating. For time, as it works on a building, necessitates an unending series of acts of rebuilding and renovation, which in turn tie the building to history. I shall at this point only introduce Rossi's definition of architecture as a 'fabric', and later in this section return to his ideas:

> ***fabbrica*** *means "building" in the old Latin and Renaissance sense of man's construction as it continues over time. Still today, the Milanese call their cathedral "la fabbrica del dôm," and understand by this expression both the size and the difficulty of the church's construction, the idea of a single building whose process goes on over time.*[29]

Although Rossi accentuates the time of culture, he implicitly acknowledges that there is a necessity to history which originates in natural, ongoing time. Indeed, natural time compellingly influences the character of a building, and it does so in ways which the practices of construction and criticism should notice. If they fail to do so, a disconnection of restoration from the reality it aims to respect may result. The voices of history are constantly disturbed by the noise of time. Therefore, I shall begin with some observations on the workings of time on buildings.

As a material object, no building is static. There is a process of deterioration in any material, a slow and often almost invisible interaction of the object with its immediate surroundings, with the climate, which sooner or later appears as, for example, oxidation or corrosion. More visible still is how paint wears off a plastered or wooden wall, or how the wall itself is transformed through sunlight, ice or rain, through weathering. Also through use, the building is worn. The changes in the appearance of a building may be invisible at any particular moment, so that it is only over time that one perceives them. But particularly buildings made of organic materials, which are more sensitive to weathering and wear, also appear, at any moment, as of a certain age. When age or time appears in a material, we do not primarily perceive it as an abstract 'distance', which is measured in years, but as temporal depth which belongs to and is embodied by the thing. Materials call forth a sense of time different from the cultural, conceptualized understanding. Through its material, the single building is continuous over time, and if familiarity is required to perceive change - that one knows how it looked five years ago, or fifteen years ago - it also emphasizes the continuity of the perceiver's own life[30]. Similarly, to grow with a tree or under a tree which one knew as a child is instructive and reassuring.

But although one would agree that buildings are subjected to time, this does not prove that natural time should be included in the aesthetics of architecture among the features we appreciate. This is true, but the question is also not about proofs. The view I propose is not more true, it does not correspond to a supposed set of facts, for such facts do not exist independently of the perspective. Clearly how the built environment appears to us is dependent on our perspective, and if there is no simply given way of seeing the world, no absolutely given culture, our present practices deserve discussion. My argument is that an approach which includes the processual side of building harmonizes better with the existential conditions of human beings and is conducive to a richer view of the built environment than an approach which one-sidedly emphasizes the building as an object. The view I propose enriches our understanding of building and of ourselves. To indicate this, I shall contrast it with some views that argue for the opposite.

The idea that works of art, buildings among these, are static, unchanging, created once-and-for-all, is connected to the view of the work of art as essentially a symbol. The timeless, codified, ideational aspects of the work are then focused upon. Nelson Goodman has developed this approach into a general theory of the arts, which is admirably lucid but also problematic for building. I shall comment on some of his points about the ontology and identity of works of art. One basis for defining how a work of art exists is, according to Goodman, to decide whether it belongs to an autographic or an allographic art form[31]. In autographic art forms the material work of art is unique, so that "the distinction between original and forgery is significant". In allographic art forms, each object that conforms to an abstract specification or notation counts as a genuine instance of the work of art, so that

forgery and copying, as understood in autographic art, are impossible. Examples are literature, music, dance and theatre, but also architecture is, to Goodman, an allographic art form. "Any building that conforms to the plans and specifications (...) is as original an instance of the work as any other."[32]

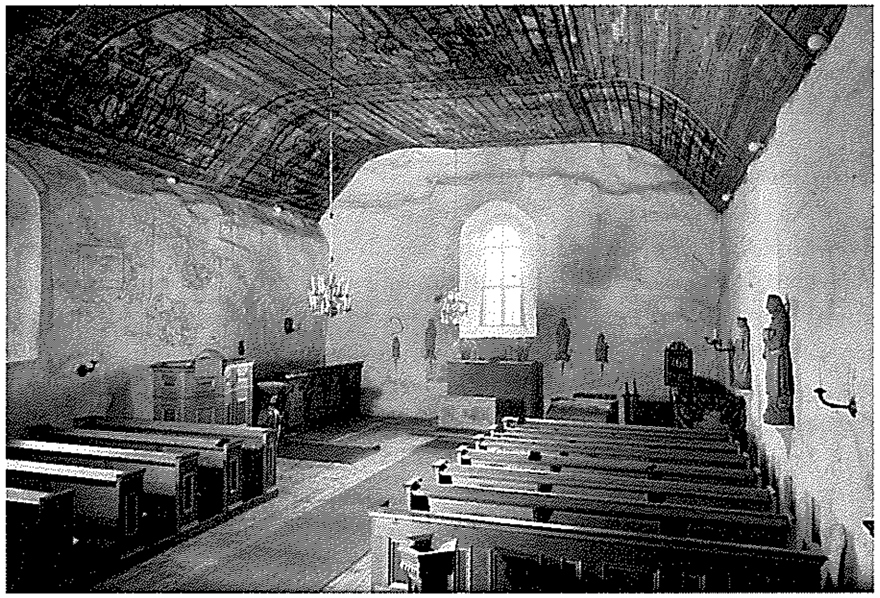
In Goodman's model, reception is overlooked, for it aims to specify the distinction between original and copy. Still it is symptomatic of an approach which emphasizes the eternal and formal aspects of a work and gives them the role of primary features. Although Goodman notes that there is a difference between genuineness and aesthetic merit his approach implicitly downplays the experiential and situational features of art, and this becomes particularly fateful for architecture[33]. In the performing arts, the script affords a minimal requirement for the identification of the work, but it far from communicates all the relevant aspects of a performance. The experience of architecture, as I shall show further on, is even more dependent on performance[34]. It can also be questioned whether art is as rational as Goodman suggests. Does it not importantly include material and unintended aspects, a something that is worked upon and resists form?

In architecture, the features specified in the plan and the features that are relevant to the aesthetic experience do not coincide. Some aesthetically relevant features, such as plans, facades and materials, are specified in the plan and in the building instructions, but so are water mains, electric wiring, heating systems and other technical equipment, which typically are not aesthetically relevant. On the other hand, colours and details may not be specified in the 'notation', although they decisively influence how the building appears. The building's relations to site or to climate may not be specified in the drawings, even when it has been designed for a certain site, which is one point of departure for the whole plan. Even more seriously, if we think that a building's identity can be specified abstractly, the influence of time, maybe also of history, is probably not given much attention. This might lead to a neglect of changes in the unnotated features and to an impoverished view of the built environment, where it becomes hard to find arguments that resist its further impoverishment. If change in unnotated features is perceived, it may not be considered important aesthetically, only from a narrowly technical point of view. According to the allographic view, or the abstract view as I shall also call it, repairs can be made without changing what the building is, for, as Robert Wicks observes, "architectural refabrications can be authentic, in so far as architectural plans are like musical scores"[35]. Also, if a building is moved to a different place, it should still be the 'same'.

How does this abstract view answer to the practices of planning and construction? It is true that in contemporary building, construction usually proceeds by following a plan which is defined in drawings, computer programs and precise instructions. However, this is not always the case, even today, and it is much less true of the total built heritage[36]. Further, the abstract view neglects the interactive aspects: the process is typically collective, which is not only to say, trivially, that many workers are involved, but that several agents, such as the client, the authorities, local people, and the architect, influence the final result[37]. There is a multiplicity and distribution of intentionality which is also directly relevant for the status of the plans, which may be revised during the planning and construction process. The result is then that they are not quite comparable to a score, which defines coming performances, but are more like a documentation of a performance which was already carried out. It is therefore dubious that plans or drawings define the core or origin of what a building is, even if we agree to consider architecture in terms of designed objects or as essentially an expressive practice[38]. Mostly there is not one, homogeneous act of expression in or behind design and construction. Intentional, expressive decisions and acts appear at different stages of building: expressive and artistic considerations may permeate the process. This is in part because the resistance and handling of materials of different kinds is an integral part of the art of building.[39]

The distinction between identification and identity may illuminate what the abstract view does and what it fails to do. One may identify a person on the basis of specific criteria, such as fingerprints or a passport. The identity of this person as felt by himself is, however, different. How I see myself or how others see me has, I hope, little or nothing to do with my fingerprints or genetic coding. Notations, scripts or specifications are comparable to criteria of identification, but not to identity, which is subjectively and culturally constituted. However, it is the latter aspect that is relevant and interesting for works of art and cultural artefacts, which may be illustrated through the idea of cultural emergence. That works of art are culturally emergent means that to be what they are, they are dependent on cultural contexts[40]. Contexts define and frame artefacts, and are relevant for understanding their character. Buildings have a high potential for cultural emergence. One may get along in the environment without knowing much about what is behind the facades, although this requires some level of familiarity or tacit knowing. But to get along well and appreciate the environment in depth, a synthesizing knowing, based on both personal experience and mediated information, is required. The relevant knowledge is also not just about the built environment, but in addition about society, culture and history. What buildings stand for and embody is generated and emerges in the practices of a culture. If identification and identity are confused, the temporal, historical and functional aspects of building may be overlooked, and it becomes more difficult to understand our relation to buildings as part of the habitat. In fact, the abstract model serves cognition rather than aesthetics. Less totalizing perspectives are more fruitful, for the meaning of buildings is not one or invariable, and here buildings are similar to works of art[41]. This is an ontological point, but also a critical one.

We might now return to the idea of building as a process. In this view,



time Church in Kemi Thorvald Lindquist's archive building is a continuous practice, opening in the spatial and temporal dimensions, rather than a body of concrete or ideal, but static and circumscribed objects. As material objects, buildings are temporally extended, and this is a both unavoidable and enriching feature which should be acknowledged and incorporated in our view of buildings as cultural objects. Time shapes us, makes us into what we are, although it does not always make us what we want to be; it is part of identity. Again we may note the intertwining of time and history: if a building is several hundred years old, the historical events we know open the density of time to our view, but our view remains impotent. We become aware of history, but we do not know it in any precise sense; there is proximity rather than presence. Known or unknown, the past is relevant to building; it is there, affirmed, but not explicated.

In its relations to past and present, building is analogous to culture at large. Both importantly include activity, both must be practised, maintained and renewed, both are primarily in the present. The world of objects is necessary to maintain and fix meaning but it is secondary to activities, for meaning originates only in life, in interaction[42]. Culture is also cultivation. Therefore, building is first and foremost dependent on and a responsibility of its contemporaries. It is in this sense that Aldo Rossi can extend the organic metaphor from the single work to the practice of building. Organicism is then no longer a metaphor which refers to stylistic or expressive features: the organic, unfolding, continuous character of architecture is an ontological condition. To see architecture along these lines has consequences for both criticism and decision-making, both for how we regard, describe and judge architecture and for the arguments we present in favour of certain solutions in building or restoration. Arguments should relate and do justice to the practices of building, but the latter cannot be separated from an ontological standpoint, whether implicit or explicit. However, if the philosophy of architecture is not in harmony with the practices of building, careful reflection is needed to locate the problem.

Attempts to clarify the relevant aspects of building restoration or construction on a historical site often operate with a set of historical values, on the one hand, and a set of aesthetic values, on the other[43]. But if the practice of building and single buildings are fundamentally temporal, it can be asked whether the distinction as such does not involve a distortion. Robert Wicks, for example, suggests that the main alternatives in choosing principles for the refabrication or reconstruction of a building are a 'Platonic' and a 'Historical' model, which he illuminates through the comparison of architecture with music and with painting and sculpture. According to the Platonic view, a restoration should aim to restore a work "in accord with a conception of its idealized, perfected appearance" or "to its former conception of perceptual glory". According to the Historical model, the historical character of a building should be preserved, and it should therefore be restored "to its condition just prior to its moment of damage".[44] Note that the relevant situation is one where a building or a part of a building has been

destroyed.

Wicks defends the Platonic view on aesthetic grounds: it will make the particular building more beautiful. In addition, he claims that the Historical model is unrealistic. But his understanding of historicity is problematic. Wicks claims that since the historical model wants to preserve the historical character of the building, the consequence would be that the building, after being rebuilt, should be allowed to "fall into ruin"[45]. This conclusion rests on the assumption that a historical model would regard the building as a natural object, an entity separated from the cultural context of human action. Only then is the decay of the building inevitable: in nature old age implies a decrease of capacities. But if the building is a cultural product, subject to history as well as to time, temporal continuity does not demand that we stop interacting with the building from the moment restoration or refabrication is finished. The responsibility for the building does not stop, as it did not stop up until the moment of damage. To let a building fall into ruin is to beg the question and avoid responsibility, unless it is a conscious choice[46].

Normally, however, a building is not only worn but also repaired. Damage is typically not due to bomb raids or earthquakes, but to the wear and tear of use or climate, where there is constant influence and constant change. To walk over a floor, to clean a window, to sleep in a room are actions that destroy the building if it is understood as a Platonic object in timeless space. But these actions do not destroy an object situated in temporal and concrete space any more than we destroy our bodies through living. Wicks is right in pointing out two dimensions relevant to the discussion of restoration, and in general the treatment of human-made environments: the aesthetic and the historical. But these are not exclusive or opposite, as he makes it seem. Since he ties the aesthetic dimension to a Platonic conception which operates with static entities or forms he overlooks many aspects which are relevant to the appearance of a building, including multisensuousness and time. Also Wicks' understanding of history is onesided and simplifying. As with Zeno's arrow, subsequent moments destroy the continuity of time. It may sometimes be useful to approach the qualities of a building by dividing them into aesthetic and historical values. But even if with the former the focus is on appearance, and with the latter on information which is not directly perceptible, the two are interdependent. Things appear to us as old or new, but are also directly part of time.

Let me summarize the arguments for a processual approach to architecture. First, as a material object, no building is static, but subject to constant, although sometimes very slow change. This is due to both internal and external natural factors: materials age, climate attacks, the building is worn by contact with other bodies and forces. Second, the appearance of a building is to a high degree dependent on environmental elements, which themselves change at a different pace (from natural light to traffic or adjacent buildings). Third, as a cultural object, the meaning of the building is dependent on several contexts which form an evolving whole. Fourth, buildings are objects of use, often intended for use, handed over by the architect to the client. An architect can follow, with curiosity, the life that takes place in his building, without wanting to restrict and define it[47]. Openness, rather than rigidity of meaning may be seen as one basic, original and, paradoxically, sometimes even intended quality of buildings. Perhaps it should be added that openness cannot be anticipated, as was attempted in the 'systems architecture' of the 1960s and 1970s. Anticipation of change is antithetical to the idea that the possibilities of the future are different from what we know. The design and the building programme give starting points, but meaning will unfold gradually[48].

An emphasis on processes does not imply that there is nothing stable in a building, only that stability and identity are based in continuity and tradition. It does imply, however, that the present meaning of a particular building is not totally fixed or given, but dependent on how it is looked at, dealt with and thought of. This dependence on cultural practices also has as a consequence that a building comes into existence at a particular time, and then ceases to exist when it is destroyed. A building is not an ideal, but a concrete object, which must exist in tangible reality. Naturally it may figure in culture through representations after it is destroyed, even influence other buildings, but that is another question. The inherent continuity of locality or of functions can and often do connect buildings which follow each other on the same site[49].

According to my view, each act of renovation implies a change, however small, to what the building is. Yet we often want to preserve what the building is. But a juxtaposition of change and identity is false and one can ask whether it would be possible to perceive, much less appreciate, identity without change. Also, it might be impossible to generally define a set of specific features which must be preserved in order to preserve a building, and it is more than probable that a case-by-case approach is more fruitful. The characteristic features may vary from roof line to entrance, facade, mass, stairs, interiors, colour, or function. All these may also be changed without the building becoming another, if the change is gradual or sensitive. There are also examples of buildings which are killed through too pedantic restoration.

Supplementing identity, it might be advisable to speak of the character or individuality of buildings and places for reasons that are related to similarities between buildings and living things[50]. Also the human personality evolves through changes, and the same is true for the character of trees. However, with persons and animals there is an interiority, a mind, something which is different from what appears publicly, but from which public appearance springs. In buildings all aspects are, on the contrary, at least in principle public: there is no core of identity that hides, no character apart from what can appear or has appeared, if not to us, then to someone else. This does not mean that buildings are whatever they seem to be; appreciation can be more or less informed. Particular qualities and overall meaning may also

become lost: if maintenance and interaction are important for the building as a physical object, they are equally so for the building as a cultural object.

Another similarity between persons and buildings is site-specificity. Human history, whether personal or collective, is, like a building, located. Time and place are intertwined, and building therefore manifests the concrete rootedness of history in a tangible reality, in what actually happened, but is beyond replication. In the frame of ongoing history, separate events and changing functions become part of what a building is to those who inhabit it or live near to it. Sometimes history is perceptible as forms or traces through which an event manifests itself, also when we do not know it. Sometimes historical knowledge is applied to a building, but also this knowledge becomes fused with the material reality.

The abstract understanding of buildings does not necessarily deny all temporal aesthetic qualities, such as the play of light or the resonance of sounds[51]. These could have been part of design. But it denies most of the temporal aspects of a building related to changes in its form or meaning. It cuts off the building from the community, society and history of which it is a part. The processual approach, with its emphasis on concrete interrelations, allows for influence of time on buildings, but also, in the opposite direction, of buildings on people. The temporal dimension is always experienced through the present, and this is especially pertinent in architecture, due to both concrete material presence and spatial fixity. In a building we can, in a geographical sense, share the situation of historical events, but the present remains our primary context of understanding[52].

Space and place

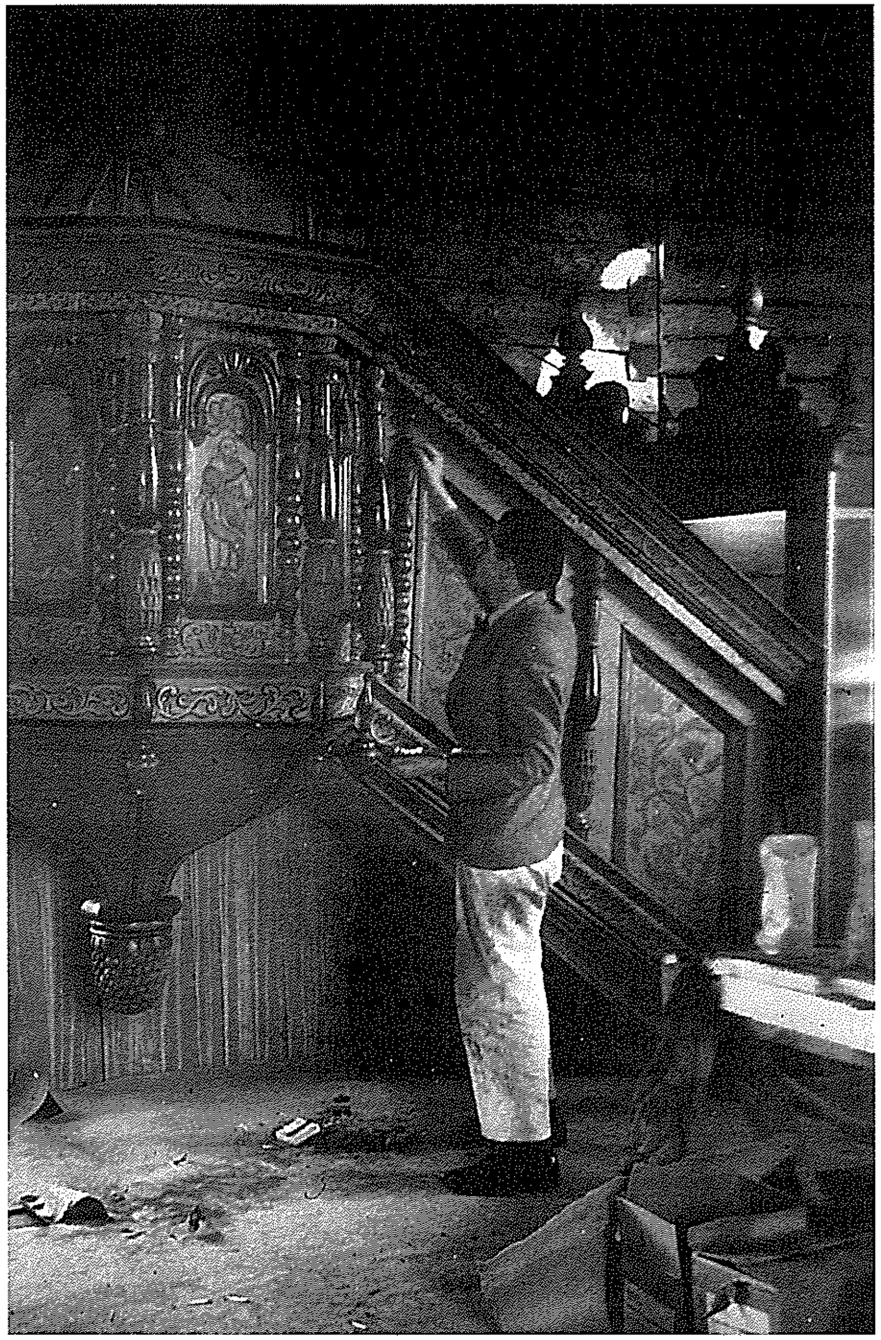
Temporality in building is site- and object-specific. The manifestation of time and the imprints of history may produce a feeling of ineffability around buildings and, in a different way, around ruins. Something is there but cannot be grasped. Traces of time and of activities are evident, but also layered upon each other, blurring each other, and clues may be missing. Often a building and an area typically, in its built aspects, originates in several times, so that there are not so much competing points of origins as a plurality of origins. Thus there are also many ways to conceive of the totality of the building or area, or to delimit it. In the habitat it is certainly true, as Rudolf Arnheim says, that "there are no fixed bounds in either space or time for any object"[53].

I now continue on the theme of environmental identity, character and individuality, with the emphasis on features which are given in the environment. This does not mean that they could be discussed in isolation from experience[54]. Key terms are 'space' and 'place'. The idea of space relevant to the environment is experienced or inhabited space: a space which is understood through a body. Space is not the abstract space of physics, yet there is anonymity and generality to space as it extends around us: it points to outside and inside, to volumes and vistas, to distances, to darkness and to light. Place is, in comparison, always local and therefore individual in a way that is similar to human beings or other entities. But it is not clear how a place is delimited; this typically depends both on given characteristics and on the perspective of experience. As experienced, space and place are influenced by time. Perceived time and history are relevant, but more basic is the temporality of perception and experience, which includes extension over time, discontinuity and iterability, but also situatedness in a particular presence. We remember some places through separate events which may be clearly demarcated, but there is mostly also the possibility to return, to check what the place is like, although it is mostly not exactly as remembered.

The plurality of perspectives and the relativity of boundaries are evident also when one focuses on the environment, rather than on the subject. In architectural theory and criticism, the importance of site and context for a design project or a building are generally acknowledged, but their relation to the intricacies of the perceptual situation may not have received enough attention. I shall begin with spatial interrelations in the built environment which are at the same time relations between functions and areas of use. I try to indicate, by connecting certain evident features to perspectives of change, that how the environment is experienced is intimately connected to how it is used, and that these aspects must not be dissociated in the attempt to understand the built environment as a human habitat. I start with an example which opens many paths for reflection.

Aldo Rossi's 'Theatre of the world', *Teatro del mondo*, made for the Venice Biennale in 1980 was an unusual architectural project in many respects[55]. One was that it was not made to last but for one summer, another that it was situated on the sea, floating on the water. As a theatre building it was also exceptional since although the interior had both stage and seats for an audience there was no backstage, no foyer and no technical equipment. Actually, it was not intended for performances; rather the theatre itself performed a theatrical function. This building could be seen as a piece of conceptual or meta-architecture rather than as architecture proper since it was there for imaginative or reflective inhabitation and use more than for the kind of use we usually put our buildings to. But we should remember that a function of meta-architecture is to make suggestions about architecture, life or society. It is for this reason that Rossi's theatre is interesting, if it also was a most charming and beautiful building.

What does the *Teatro del mondo* then suggest or ask? A first thing to note is the transformation or metaphorization of the 'theatre', or 'play', which here do not refer to a function or performances inside the building, but are put into play by the building in relation to its environment. The building appears as an actor and makes us observant of the world as a theatre and stage. In this respect, the floating theatre is more like a piece of sculpture than architecture, for the space it creates is primarily a space around itself[56]. But if the building appeared as an actor on the water of the lagoon



la fabbrica Thorvald Lindquist's archive that was its immediate stage, then where did the stage end? The project became suggestive of the world as a whole, pointed to the world as an ongoing performance full of individual and collective manifestations, conflicts, but also backwaters where nothing in particular seems to happen. A floating building is not site-specific in the way buildings usually are, but it does thematize its situation as a point in space and time in a more abstract and immaterial way that, non-assertive, might be characterized as anti-architectural[57].

The *Teatro del mondo* thematized the relations between inside and outside, between a building's function and use and its appearance, between the temporary versus the stable, between the particular and concrete and the ideal, between architecture and sculpture, and it pointed to the importance of scale, since it relativized and questioned the larger environment, not so much Venice, perhaps, as the world around. It also demonstrated the interdependence of form, function, scale and actual use, dimensions which do not fuse as they influence each other. As the next chapter is devoted to these interrelations, I shall at this point only refer to some spatial aspects.

To begin with, there is the relativity of inside and outside in architecture, which is related to the designated function of the building. A theatre is usually highly specialized in this respect: on the stage an emphatically different world is presented, compared to what goes on outside or around[58]. But the relation of interior and exterior is also dependent on the size of the building and on the layout and relations between interior spaces. In a small building, or in a hut, a tent or a vessel, the interior is experienced as relative to the environment at large rather than as a space of its own. This is partly because, while the hut provides shelter for a small group, there is not enough space to articulate a differentiated community area inside the built structure with separate, interrelated rooms for different persons or activities. When an exterior space is inhabited or populated by someone or something, it may be perceived as a kind of interior, a surrounding and surrounded space. A building may play the role of such a subject in perception.[59]

In the interior, access and routes are important for the character of the space, and since these are dependent on the user's relation to the building, to the functions it serves, and to materials and light, they cannot be seen from sections and plans alone. Also, there may be more relations between the experienced spaces than the plan suggests, for rooms relate to what is around them also through sounds or smells that seep through walls or ceilings. In addition, in any building of some size which one often visits there are certain favourite paths or passages which become a backbone of the building as experienced[60]. But also the visual relations of experienced space, which are indicated on the plan where one can see the placement of doors and windows, are in reality much richer. The sense of sight is then complemented with other senses. Seeing through a sequence of rooms, one may see how the light falls differently, depending on the trees outside, and one may hear voices from some of the rooms and feel the particular smell and moisture of this

building which greets one's body. Through synaesthesia, understood as the simultaneous impact of the senses, including knowledge, the separation of spaces is not absolute[61]. Even if a body cannot come through a wall, the wall can communicate, in addition to separating what is inside and outside[62]. Both functions are important, and it should be evident that the right balance is dependent on many factors. Also the extension of a building's surroundings is relative. It may be difficult to decide precisely - in addition to being dependent on the culture - how large an area around a house should be seen as belonging to it. The presence of a building does not stop at its outer walls but radiates around it to an area which is shared with other elements.[63]

If the extension of the building is relative, there is also an internal heterogeneity of the building as a material object. Taking up this question, we move from a discussion focused on space to one focused on place. Buildings and larger built complexes, such as a hospital, a campus, or a historical castle, are often without reflection experienced as forming a whole, a totality. This is one side of the primacy of the present in experience. Nevertheless, beneath and beyond this appearing unity there may be a notable plurality, a multitude of intentional and unintentional influences that have shaped the complex which is now experienced as one. Historical buildings or areas are a case in point: construction and destruction often extend over hundreds of years and are discontinuous rather than continuous; different parts stem from different periods and the whole has been shaped and reshaped according to competing, even opposite ideals and needs. Some parts may be built by anonymous builders, while others are erected by master-builders and commissioned by a ruler. What was once so clearly either background or foreground may not be so anymore, in a time of different rulers and values. This is an additional reason for the difficulty to decide what belongs properly to the work.

In practice, the reasons for regarding a complex as a whole are often historical and functional rather than formal or spatial. If the Hradqany Castle in Prague is one, this is because its very different parts belong to and have originated in a particular, gradually developing whole[64]. This oneness, as we have it, was not preconceived, but evolved, as in each situation there were given conditions but no strict determination of the future[65]. That history takes its course should be remembered also when looking into the history of a building: there is not one homogeneous line of narrative, but several, some of them long and continuous, some short, discontinuous, interrupted. In a like manner, there is not one but several possible grounds for the perceived identity of a particular building or complex. Among these are authorship, style, function, history, site, and typically they interact in establishing a unity.

In everyday situations we do not normally reflect upon the unity of a place. We take unity as given, even when we do not know if it is there, an attitude which corresponds to the fact that built complexes are constituted historically and culturally. This means that there is, at each moment, a set of features that structure the built environment and make it what it is, features which are the context and ground also of our personal relation to it, which in turn become part of it. When we approach a building imaginatively, we might find unexpected angles, yet they are angles on the building; the building is there as a permanence which accepts or rejects our approach, our attempts to use it and our interpretation; it is a permanence beyond our present ideas and practices. To say even of a natural environment that it is as such without structure distorts its complexity. As material and cultural objects, buildings are shaped by real events, natural and cultural, so that there is a resistance, even a stubbornness of the environment against any single interpretation. Therefore place is important for understanding the environment: the notions of space and place are neither competitors nor identical, but complement each other.

In human geography, place has been described as a qualitative concept, implying a historical and social context, belonging and identity, or as comprising the fusion of human and natural order where "[t]he essence of place lies in the largely unselfconscious intentionality that defines places as profound centers of human existence"[66]. In this view, a place is always importantly inhabited and experienced[67]. But if experience is given too much emphasis, it might blind us to the otherness, plurality and resistance of places to any single interpretation[68]. Although the meaning of a place is cultural to a large extent, this should not be taken to imply that a particular meaning exists only thanks to the present experiencer. We experience the castle's age, we do not project it upon the building. On the other hand, it is equally mistaken to locate the meaning of a place simply in its natural or cultural givens, in a defined *genius loci*[69]. The forward movement of time and the ongoing differentiation of culture are then sacrificed for a backwards movement of interpretation, where both are in fact necessary.

Habitation is, on the other hand, certainly a significant aspect of place. A place attracts the subject in one way or another, it appears as habitable and offers affordances for real or imaginative dwelling[70]. The place indicates either that someone lives here, that someone lived here, or that one could live here, whatever living otherwise implies. This is a noteworthy perspective also on natural place: the bird's nest transforms the treetop into a place. How animals create places is not very different from how humans create them, and in both cases the activities of an agent and their perceptible traces are relevant. But in a cultural, and notably in an urban, richly sedimented environment, the social and political dimensions of life are clearly most relevant: it is these that provide the kind of opacity which suggests that the environment, not just its perceiver, is heavy with a "largely unselfconscious intentionality."[71]

As I understand place, it includes locality and given characteristics which are actualized in experience but based on what is there before and regardless of a particular instant of perception[72]. The characteristic features

may belong to the topography, to the style or scale of building, to the history and function of the area or to the kind of life that goes on there: the basis of our recognition of something as a place often includes different elements. To experience a portion of land as a place bears witness to its richness. An area can comprise many places, and a place can give rise to different actualizations, different faces of the place[73]. A place is thus one, but cannot be specified or described as one particular. How a place is experienced and what places are focused upon depends on communication and use: landmarks and paths are relative to how a person inhabits a city[74]. How we perceive a place, or a building, is dependent on how we have become familiar with it, if also on how familiar we are. Buildings can be important to us for personal reasons, areas can become seen as places because they are connected to our personal history. The limits and structures of the habitat cannot be described objectively or decisively.

If place as experienced is always mediated, culturally and personally, it establishes a meeting of personal and social meanings. A subjective experience of public space is never relevant only 'privately', but also to what that space is. On the other hand, the subject's experience is dependent on what the place can offer. But the interplay of meaning between subject and world, inhabitant and place, does not constitute a cage from which meaning cannot escape or differ[75]. Time guarantees a continuous differentiation, so that there is always the possibility of living differently, if not today, then tomorrow, if not in the way I wanted, then in another way.

It should finally be emphasized that a building or an area opens to us as a place through concrete experience. Descriptions cannot replace experience, although they can significantly deepen it. The sense of place, the feeling of place and for place, is a result of aesthetically alert experiencing, sensitive and probing, but a place is not identical to and cannot be reduced to experienced meaning. Further, an important element of the experience of place is the sense of implacement, of being-here, at this particular point, in a material reality which appears only in part[76]. The presentness of experiencing place, its deictic dimension, is about individuality, proximity and a double presence.

Permanence and change

Permanence, alterations and change in the built environment draw together some of the remarks on the identity of places. Since change and alterations are in large part dependent on nature and natural time, I shall include discussions of rural landscapes in order to highlight some aspects also of cityscapes that might go unnoticed if we focus solely on its urban and constructed aspects.

To perceive change, one must be able to perceive permanence. The interdependence of change and permanence is a necessary precondition of our perception of both places and people.[77] It answers to a view of identity based on continuities, rather than on strict definition of a *status quo*. But even if we accept that no place will stay the same in a strict sense, we do recognize places and enjoy their stability. Without its landmarks, a city or a landscape would not be 'itself', and it would also not be so much ours. In the latter respect, the environment is not just perceptible surroundings, but also affordances for activities and modes of perception of practical and contemplative importance. For example, the Ostrobothnian plains offers its inhabitants the possibility to look far. In a hillier landscape, the Ostrobothnian may miss, inseparably, a landscape and a mindscape: landscape as mindscape and mindscape enforced by landscape. But she would also miss an activity and a habit. To stand on the porch and let one's eyes rest on the plains may be intimately integrated in one's mental economy.

The permanence of a town- or landscape is due, on a basic level, to the permanence of material elements, for example buildings and traffic arteries, which occupy, stay in and define certain localities. Permanence is indeed importantly a *stabilitas loci*[78]. This is evident if we reflect on the place from the perspective of the present, here and now. On the other hand, if we compare a place as it is today to how it was a hundred years ago, we will recognize, on an immediate perceptual level, the importance of moving and movable elements for the appearance of the place. These represent, in a certain epoch, a permanent presence, some aspects of which I shall return to shortly. Topography, which together with the climate conditions our feeling and our view of the city, also belongs to its permanent elements. Topography and climate work in different ways and make themselves felt kinaesthetically, visually, auditively and olfactorily: forcing us to move up and down, opening or blocking views, muffling or echoing noises, letting smells and moisture brood over the city or taking them away.

Topography is a permanent element of urban, natural and rural landscapes and especially in the latter, it is easy to see its importance for the character of a place. Mountains, rivers, lakes, islands are permanent elements, but also the disposition of field and forest land, formed by human history, are experienced as permanent and given. They may not be so, however, and an illustrative example is provided by the Netherlands. In the northern parts, the visitor sees a peaceful rural landscape which appears as restful and as having existed since times immemorial. The truth is different: no more than a hundred years ago the coastline was constantly changing and the inhabitants struggled to keep the sea away. In both urban and rural landscapes, some of the permanent elements stand out as landmarks on both functional and formal grounds. Typically these can be perceived from afar and from different perspectives; thus they dominate or gather the landscape perceptually and help orientation. Often they also are, or have been, of central importance in the life of the community.

Permanent elements are necessary for the experienced continuity and character of the landscape, for they enable us to recognize where we are. These elements appear differently in different situations, but are not

experienced as changing in themselves, although they do change, slowly. However, if change is radical or sudden, it becomes a change in the landscape itself, which becomes another, strange or different. Particularly in natural landscapes, changes in biotopes or ecological systems can be as serious as changes in land forms, for example through sand-pits or quarries. Both types of changes influence not only what is perceived, but also the conditions and possibilities of perception. A hill is also a place from where to look. A forest is a synaesthetic setting rather than a perceptual object. The presence of algae in the Baltic deprives us of the possibility of looking into the water. The importance of such changes for a particular landscape is of course dependent on our idea of what is essential to landscapes in general and of the characteristics of the landscape in question. There are considerable differences between a landscape as scenery and a landscape as habitat, but also between the role of a single tree on the plain and in the forest.

A building always changes the existing landscape and often becomes a permanent element of it. Here we must note the importance of what we think of the element, which is part of how we perceive it. A barracks or a machine is not necessarily perceived as a permanent part of a place, as actually belonging there. Therefore, their presence in a place of beauty might be less disturbing and easier to accept than the presence of a smaller permanent structure. This at least seems to be the way those authorities think who allow the huge passenger ferries to be parked in the very centre of Helsinki. In addition, in this case the presence of the ferries is practically permanent: when one leaves, another comes.

In spite of but also thanks to permanence, any experience of an environment takes place in a situation which is both different from any other situation and in flux. Whenever we visit a place, we encounter a version of it. The angle and intensity of light, the wind, the time of day and the season, people, birds, other animals or cars are among the factors that influence how the place appears to us. Such varying elements are not external to the place but parts of it, for the place is either never without them, as with the weather and light, or never without their possible presence, even when they are not perceived. In a particular situation, many of the varying elements typically change and move, while we also change perspective, direct and redirect attention, move around. Perspectives and relations therefore fluctuate, even when elements are not added or subtracted[79]. I call this kind of flux 'situational change'. It is permanently ongoing and influenced by weather and seasons as well as by movement. The elements are more or less constantly present; only the amounts vary: it is colder or warmer, more or less humid, windy, light. In the interior of buildings, similar elements are present, but they change in a different way. Inside buildings temperature, light and humidity are regulated by the builder or planner. In a public building artificial light is typically part of the design, similarly to the organization of space. Still, both the interior and the exterior of buildings can be studied with an eye to how they react to the local climate[80]. The naturally unplanned then becomes a test of the building's quality, comparable to land forms or local culture. A building may more or less successfully answer to these conditions.[81]

Looking at landscape again, one might note the importance of biotopes and habitats for the ways in which situational change is manifested. The wind appears differently in the conifer and in the deciduous forest, not to speak of the plains. But also animals have a latent presence in a landscape which is in certain respects close to that of climatic phenomena. The perceptive observer does not have to see the elk or the hare in person to know that it is somewhere in the forest. Animals leave traces and, in addition, if one is experienced, one can expect a certain species to inhabit a certain kind of environment. A winter landscape might be marked by snow and hares in similar ways. One day there is snowfall, another day we perceive a hare. Both might be memorable occasions, but both are also occasions when something latent appears, rather than occasions when new elements are added to the place.

Biotopes are important, even constitutive elements of a natural landscape, and they are necessary for its continuation. Forestry or hunting do not destroy a landscape, but if the whole forest is clear-cut or the hare population extinguished, then the area will become different. That this is a question of degrees, of how much one can change, does not make the point less serious. But the idea can also be applied to urban environments, where the most important question is not what Venice would be without its doves. Human habitation is the significant analogy, in a city, of animal habitation in the forest. However many species share the urban environment with us, in our perspective humans are central, and it is also we who most significantly shape a city. Cities are perceived as belonging to culture and as manifesting different forms of human life. The interesting point is not that the city is inhabited, but how it is inhabited, which is different in different areas. Certain forms of habitation or use may be latent, constitutive features of particular places. How the place is inhabited has direct effects on how it appears, even to an uninformed perceiver, a visitor. Both from a material perspective and from one of meaning, those who live in a place maintain and recreate it through their activities.

Rhythmic change, the alterations of day and night and of the seasons, is related to situational change, but here the experience is differently focused. The regular variations which I call rhythmic change are on some level, but in no mechanical way, conditions for situational change: in the autumn, which is a rhythmic occurrence, we can expect storms, which are situational occurrences. The experience of daylight or of the seasons is, however, focused on the passage of time rather than on a particular event. The exhilarating experience of a northern spring is certainly an experience of joy in the present, including wonder at the recurrence of light. But its necessary experiential context is the long winter, which at that moment of prolonged waiting is almost behind us, and the short but abundant summer which is to come. It is

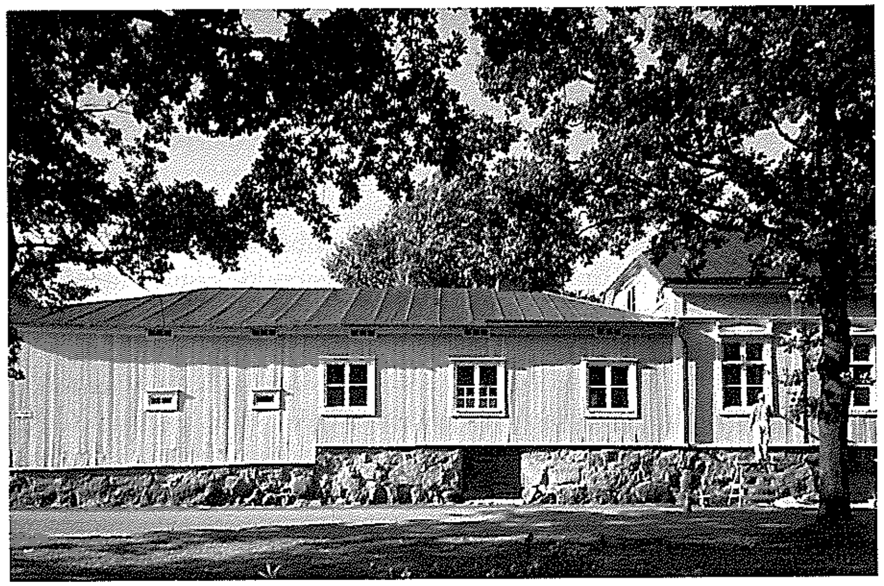
our being experienced that enables us to enjoy this humble spring. The spell of one snowdrop on frozen ground, with a wet snowfall at the end of April, is not easy to explain to people who are unfamiliar with our seasonal rhythms.

In the same way as biotopes, seasons make a short- and long-term difference on a land- or townscape. They decide what plants and animals we can have and what colour the ground will take on. Seasons and climate condition the objective and perceptual features of a place, including imaginative ways of seeing. Thus snow covers the ground and protects the roots of plants from freezing, but it also wraps fields, forests and lakes, cars and houses, and puts a world to sleep. May it be noted that for the experience of environment, climatic changes, such as the greenhouse effect, are at least as consequential as changing the course of a river.

Processual change is, like rhythmic change, characterized by a certain regularity and lawfulness. To processual change belongs everything that is subject to natural growth or decay, which includes not only plants and animals, but also buildings, roads or vehicles. It may be pointed out that growth and decay, vitality and death, are, if considered systematically, dependent on the perspective we choose: our own, or a squirrel's, an insect's, a germ's. A tree can be the shelter of birds or of humans, a human the shelter of tapeworms. I have mentioned examples of processual change earlier and shall not repeat them here, but there is another aspect, also touched upon, that deserves to be noted as manifesting a dialectic of permanence and change in the lawfulness of the processual. One expects the tree to grow at a certain pace, and the passage of time can be measured and experienced through looking at the size of the tree now, compared to its former size. This cultural role of trees is enhanced in the built environment, where the background of the trees has a stable size. But the passing of time can also be perceived on buildings where, for example, the fading of lime colours measures time and presents a concrete image of its passing.

If forms of life are not only constitutive of the permanence of environments but also afford elements of situational change, they are in addition part of the rhythms of a city. The urban alternation of day and night is not only an alteration of light and temperature, but also a rhythmic change in the visual, auditory and olfactory functional environment which the city, as a whole, is. Morning, day-time and night have different possibilities and challenges when it comes to activities or to getting from one place to another. Social rhythms are in part - but only in part - dependent on rhythms of nature, as is evident in the alternations of working days and holidays. Different situations are created by the presence or absence of human beings who perform in different ways, but also of vehicles and other objects which are either temporarily present or activated only at certain hours, such as street lamps, shops, or benches.

It is time for some concluding remarks on permanence and change. First, the distinction of permanent, changing and temporary elements is



dwelling MFA, photo Kari Hakli

relative both as such and in relation to our perspective. The tree is, again, a good example: it is experienced as a permanent presence not in spite of, but because it undergoes constant change. In the world we face degrees of permanence and change, rather than absolute permanence or total change. But, second, these distinctions can help us to distinguish and describe the elements through which a place preserves and cultivates its identity and continues through change. Although the key elements are processual they can be identifed through the permanence of what persists through changes and remains in place. This takes us, third, to a further aspect of the question of permanence and change, namely the role of representations and images of places in our identification of them. Although a place on each new visit appears different, we have no difficulty in recognizing it and might even recognize it as precisely the same. But this is due to our understanding, rather than to the environment as it is.[82]

It is easy to accept that our habitat is changing, since it is mediated by perceptions and by cultural meanings that in themselves are historical and subject to modifications and additional views. But the processual approach implies, moreover, that there is no stable, given reality. This is not a new idea, but it seems that it has not been given enough reflection in the contexts of building and dwelling.

Nature, culture and dwelling

If we look at the built environment from the perspective of architecture, we probably focus on intentional features: style, the organization of space, use of materials, colours, and so forth. Yet both in an ontological and in a phenomenal perspective, the environment is codetermined by features that were not planned and are independent of human intentions: topography, climate, weather, vegetation and animals. These naturally unplanned elements are present in a built environment as a background, but they also affect buildings; for example, they leave traces on exteriors and are felt in the interior through the quality of the air, as humidity or smells.

On the whole, the naturally unplanned in the built environment is an effect of time, a way in which natural time appears to us. By calling this dimension unplanned rather than contingent, I want to stress that it belongs of necessity to any inhabited environment and is no less essential than the planned, although it is, as compared to the planned, unintended and, in a sense, random. Also how a building is worn through its contact with human bodies is part of the naturally unplanned, but there is certainly a delicate distinction between what is naturally and what is socially unplanned. In addition, this distinction is relative to our perspective. If we look at a place with the visitor's, not the inhabitant's eyes, then we might not distinguish between the naturally and the socially unplanned: we simply perceive an intended order and an actual disorder. But in experiencing a place as inhabitants, the difference between simple wear and tear, on the one hand, and intended use, misuse or abuse is significant. It makes a difference whether disorder is caused by neglect or through a performance of activities which may be only momentarily interrupted. The remodelling of environments is an ongoing process where one side relates to construction activities, and may appear as disorder, especially if the aim is not understood, and another side relates to the different forms of life of inhabitants, which may be contrary to what authorities or others find appropriate.

If the planned is only perceptible against the background of the unplanned, the reverse is no less true. It is because a building has form that we can observe a loss of form, it is against an ideal of perfection that imperfection becomes significant. However, in most discussions and criticism of architecture, only the planned is noted as aesthetically interesting. But insisting on the interplay of perceived and unperceived, visible and invisible, nature and culture, we must note that what appears does not just show itself, but also suggests what is not shown. In certain cases, the naturally unplanned functions as a reminder and an index of the limitations of planning, as when materials do not last.

By acknowledging the presence of the unplanned we get a complementary perspective on what is present in the built environment. Here we may recall the two relevant meanings of the word 'building', which refers to the activity of building but also to the objects that result from that activity. Both process and object are intentional in a general sense, as opposed to random. Even if the builder works without drawings, his work involves ongoing planning, and this is partly because unforeseen elements interfere. In a similar way buildings, as they exist and are experienced at any particular moment, contain both planned and unplanned aspects. The use and articulation of a certain material in a façade is planned, but the way the material reacts to the weather is not, although it can be foreseen.

The notion of the 'naturally unplanned', present only through the planned, avoids a criticism of the use of 'nature' as a meaningless idealization. For example, it is sometimes said that to discuss nature is unwarranted, for there is no concept of nature independent of a human culture. This is of course true, and true for any concept. In this particular case one could further point out that, in reverse, the concept of culture most often exists in relation to nature, which is a relational concept.

The statement that we cannot meaningfully talk about nature sometimes seems related to the assumption that the use of the concept 'nature' implies an identification of the concept with particular appearances, or even an essence. This is not the case: it is indeed possible to use the word 'nature' without trying to define its essence or describe it, and this might even be a necessary strategy, since we cannot extract nature from the world at large, separate it and put our finger on it. Both 'nature' and 'earth' are often used to refer to something which is outside conceptual mastery, and this is an important point of these words[83]. Nature, as Spinoza's *natura naturans*, creative nature, generates life and change, not only in *natura naturata*, created nature,

but also in cultural products. It is creative nature, nature in the climate or in our bodies, we have to co-operate with in practical life and adapt to in personal life. What is true in the idea that there is no nature as such is that nature does not exist for us independently of our standpoint, but this is true for many other phenomena as well.

If nature is understood this way, and as relative to culture, a word must be said on culture, too. It is first worth noting that if nature is other than culture, this does not demand that they are opposite in every respect. If nature is seen as process, culture does not have to be reified. It is common to speak of culture and nature as if they were opposed: nature is raw, while culture is cooked; nature is animal, while culture is human; nature is without sense, while culture is meaningful; nature is sensuous, while culture is spiritual. These statements, which are normally presented as descriptive, are, to a high degree, evaluative and their apparent factuality makes it more easy to believe that in human existence progress consists in culture ousting nature, where these are separate phenomena. Still, in our concrete life-world nature and culture can in most cases only be separated conceptually: we are ourselves both natural and cultural creatures. We forget too easily that concepts like 'nature' and 'culture', 'animal' and 'human', do not denote separately existing entities, but instead articulate conceptual distinctions and perceptual differences by which we order the world, but which are not identical to the world.

In its etymological roots, the word 'culture' refers to cultivation, to rural agricultural activities, like growing crops or raising animals[84]. In these activities, nature is worked upon, but also worked with. It is important to note that the success of the labour is dependent on the workers' knowledge of and adaption to natural processes, which take their own course and in the last instance decide when and how the work must be done. Nature is not only material; co-operation is a necessary condition of successful farming. The aim of farming is the maintenance and enhancement of human life in an evident and necessary interdependence with other species. The agricultural context also makes us more aware of the organic conditions of existence: growth, nutrition, birth and death.

In cultivation, nature does not just change into culture. Nature and culture continue to exist side by side, intertwined[85], co-present in mutual influence, interdependent, but without either losing its own character. The idea of culture as cultivation makes it easier to perceive the simultaneity of nature and culture, where nature is present as those processes which, in Hannah Arendt's words, "come into being without the help of man" and which are "not 'made' but grow by themselves into whatever they become"[86]. In contrast, the element of culture consists, on the one hand, of our intentional activities and, on the other, of the material and immaterial entities and structures with whose help we cope with the world.

In combining with nature, culture is forced neither to destroy nor cover it[87]. Martin Heidegger's notion of dwelling points to a related sensitivity to both site and situation as they are found. To dwell is to abide but, on the other hand, dwelling is also an activity, and so cannot preclude, but has to include changes to the site as it is found or given. The notion of dwelling implies that human beings belong with places, but not that persons belong to particular places where they have to spend the rest of their lives. The observation that homelessness summons us to dwell rather suggests dwelling as an activity and an ability.[88] Dwelling, we are not outsiders to the place, but appropriate it and become appropriated. Part of my history and my possibilities are present to me through my places, and to dwell is necessarily to dwell meaningfully.

A central claim of Heidegger's is that building, which among other things is the construction of dwellings, should share the sheltering quality present in dwelling[89]. It is easy to agree with this, especially when we remember that dwelling includes attention not only to the site and its possibilities but also to the situation: the way a place is inhabited. The need for the kind of tacit reflectivity implicit in dwelling becomes evident through a concern for a better built environment, but also through the observation, which is both empirical and ontological, that no building is ever finished. A building cannot 'stand as it is', and since the natural processes which are part of the very materials of building do not stop, it would be wise to note, adapt, and take advantage of them. Also, if we choose to see culture as cultivation, as a form of life rather than as a system of forms, we have reason to pay attention to those processes in building which, from the planners' perspective, are unintended. Building, in both senses of the word - verb and noun -, becomes dwelling, but only if we acknowledge nature and understand culture as a process.

It must be noted that in using the words 'nature', 'culture' and 'building' in this way, we point to dimensions and aspects of the world, not to separate realms or objects. Language may deceive us, but the limits of our language are the limits of our world[90] only if we firmly believe so, and the reverse idea, that the limits of our world are the limits of our language deserves equal attention, especially in a context of environmental aesthetics. That concepts frame our cognitive and, to some extent, practical dealings with the world does not mean that they draw a line which we cannot cross. The ongoing modification of language is rather a sign of its inbuilt perspectivism, which can be seen as a chronic insufficiency, but only if we demand everything. To see our patterns of life, material and immaterial, as containing elements of both nature and culture is not an objectively true view. It is based on a set of values and on a wish to find a livable balance in-between nature and culture, with both[91].

I return in the last chapter to the value of the naturally unplanned. My intention here has only been to point out its presence in architecture and in our experience of architecture. In the presence of the unplanned in the midst of the planned we can recognize one side of the processual character of environments. The presence of nature in the environment is importantly a presence of time.

Notes

[1] Deleuze 1989, 280.

[2] On 'meaning' and 'sense', compare Levinas 1987, 75-107, and 1992/1986, 231-257; also Ricoeur 1976, 19-22.

[3] See chapter one, first section.

[4] That things make sense or fail to do so is significant: sense is not possessed in the way meaning is.

[5] Compare the discussion of 'space' below, chapter four, first section.

[6] Miller 1993, 150.

[7] For various emphases and approaches, see Berleant 1992 and 1997; Carlson 1979, 1981, 1995; Hepburn 1984; Kemal and Gaskell 1993b; Sepänmaa 1993.

[8] To my view, this might be a risk with the approaches advocated by Berleant 1992 and 1997, or Casey 1993.

[9] Danto 1973, 15 and 1981, 116. See also Wollheim's discussion of the Institutional theory, Wollheim 1989/1980, 165; or Sharpe 1991/1983, 185: "Works of art are objects *for* interpretation."

[10] Miller 1993, 15; compare'also Langer 1953 and Dewey 1980/1934.

[11] Miller 1993, 135-180; compare Goldman 1990 and 1995.

[12] Danto 1973 and 1981.

[13] See Frampton 1985a.

[14] B.R. Tilghman convincingly points out the impossibility of disentangling the classificatory and the evaluative use of 'art'; Tilghman 1984, 50-55, 67-70, 91.

[15] For example, Langer 1964, 75-94; for a view of art as a general human practice, see Dewey 1980/1934.

[16] These are G. F. W. Hegel's and F. Schelling's views. Hegel 1955, vol. 1, 89-90, 95 and vol. 2, 23-86; Beardsley 1975/1966, 233.

[17] Harries 1997, 25.

[18] This bias is present in Scruton, 1980.

[19] Compare the critical stance towards aesthetics in Eagleton 1990, Harries 1997, 16-26, Bauman 1993, 168-169.

[20] Avantgardism is often an attempt to bring art and life closer to each other; see Calinescu 1988/1987, also Gablik 1993 on the new forms of "reargardism".

[21] Sedlmayr 1968.

[22] For example, Levinson 1979 or Wollheim 1989/1980, 143-152.

[23] See Werne 1987, 19-20.

[24] Here I am inspired by Tore Tallqvist, who has emphasized the importance of the two temporal dimensions for building; compare Tallqvist 1995. Let me note that when I use the term 'building' without a specification, both the praxis and the products of building are implied; compare the discussion below in this section. On nature and culture, see also the fifth section of the present chapter.

[25] For a many-sided approach to weathering, see Mostafavi and Leatherbarrow 1993.

[26] If time is "succession only in so far as it is numbered", this is close to what I call the time of history; Whitrow 1989, 49-50.

[27] Compare the discusson in chapter five, third section.

[28] "What is historically primary in itself is our present.", Husserl 1997/1970, 373.

[29] Rossi 1989/1982, 18.

[30] On the importance of the "physical continuity of body over time", see Warnock 1987, 69, 67.

[31] Goodman 1989/1968, 112-122; compare Goodman 1984/1978, 48-49. My use of the term symbol here follows Goodman.

[32] Goodman 1989/1968, 113, 20.

[33] Compare Shusterman 1997a, note 28, 227, and 1997b, 36.

[34] The problems with accommodating architecture in the frame of allographic and autographic arts manifest problems which arise with other art forms and cultural

practices as well. One major problem is the separation of the work from its context, so that a thing is defined, but is scarcely a culturally meaningful object. On the latter aspect, see Margolis 1984, 119-127.

[35] Wicks 1994, 168.

[36] Notable examples of construction on site in modern architecture are Sigurd Lewerentz and Antonio Gaudí. The latter's perhaps best-known on-site construction is the *Sagrada Familia* in Barcelona, which was begun in 1884 and is still unfinished, but in progress. Compare Tarragó 1988 and, on Lewerentz, Ahlin 1985.

[37] For a case study involving these elements, see von Bonsdorff 1994.

[38] For a discussion of the 'physical' and the perceptual components of aesthetic objects, see Beardsley 1981, 29-58.

[39] Compare Miller's observations on the blurring of the boundary between virtual and actual space, art and reality in the design and experience of gardens; Miller 1993, 121-131.

[40] Margolis 1980, 27-49.

[41] Preziosi 1979; on visual arts, Carrier 1991 and Roskill 1989.

[42] Compare Arendt 1958, 175-247.

[43] See Nikula 1989 or 1996, 58; Wicks 1994. Nikula also interestingly points to the interactions between history and aesthetics; 1989, 73-74.

[44] Wicks 1994, 165-166.

[45] Wicks 1994, 167-168.

[46] Compare Simmel 1923, 137.

[47] Alvar Aalto took his hand from the Paimio Sanatorium, the Viipuri Library, the MIT Dormitory after he had completed them. They were now serving functions. Another Finnish architect, Raili Pietilä, once said that "our buildings speak. But they say this one day and that another day", lecture in Oulu, December 1994.

[48] Compare, for a narrative understanding of history, Johnson 1989.

[49] Compare Rossi 1989/1982, 86-87, on 'primary elements' of cities. An interesting example is Our Saviour's Church in Moscow, see also chapter six, first section.

[50] Regarding personal identity, Mary Warnock emphasizes continuity over time rather than unchanging essences; Warnock 1987.

[51] For light, a classical locus in modern architecture is Le Corbusier 1924.

[52] For a useful discussion of these questions in the interpretation of art, see Sharpe 1994 and McFee 1995, where my symphaties are with McFee.

[53] Arnheim 1977, 68.

[54] In chapter five I approach these questions with the emphasis on the experiencer.

[55] For a fuller presentation of this building, see Portoghesi 1981 and Rossi 1981.

[56] Compare Arnheim 1977, 28-31. On the distinction between sculpture and architecture, see Scruton 1980, 7-10, Savile 1993, 157-180 and Harries 1997, 219-220.

[57] According to Georges Bataille; Bataille 1997a and 1997b, also Hollier 1989.

[58] This is the normal case, which is true even where a Brechtian alienation effect is sought.

[59] An example is the Snow church which was erected in Helsinki in the winter 1996-1997 as a copy, three times smaller, of the eighteenth century church which stood on what is now the Senate Square. The project demonstrated how a building creates space not just inside the walls but also around itself.

[60] This is analogous to the experiences of cities described in Lynch 1968/1960, 14-45, 47.

[61] Gernot Böhme notes that synaesthesia is about "intermodal qualities" and emphasizes that it arises in material environments where we ourselves are present; Böhme 1995, 54-55, also 76, 93, 142.

[62] To Heidegger, the boundary is "where something begins its presencing"; Heidegger 1954, 155.

[63] As Hepburn points out we cannot decide "where the aesthetically relevant context of a building ends."; Hepburn 1984, note 5, 34-35. On the other hand, there is a sense in which one can speak of a proxemics proper to buildings, as referring to the space they demand around themselves; Arnheim 1977, 26-31; on proxemics, Hall 1969/1966.

[64] Compare also von Bonsdorff 1990.

[65] Compare Kolb 1994, 39-40.

[66] Relph 1986/1976, 43; James M. Houston, quoted in Karjalainen 1986, 124; compare Karjalainen 1986, 123-126.

[67] See Karjalainen 1986, 133-7, and Relph 1986/1976.

[68] Compare Relph 1993, 26-27, 34-38.

[69] This is a tendency in Christian Norberg-Schulz; see, for example, 1975, 432, 1980, or 1994; and, for a critical discussion, Bengtsson 1994. I return to *genius loci* in chapter five, third section.

[70] On affordances, see chapter one, second section.

[71] Relph, as noted above. For examples, see Armando 1996, 21-24. The latter book as a whole demonstrates urban temporal opacity.

[72] Here my view differs from Casey's, who puts a greater emphasis on the body and present experience but also understands place more broadly than I would be willing to do; Casey 1993, 3-39, 16.

[73] Compare Deleuze and Guattari 1994/1980, 205-234.

[74] These terms were introduced by Kevin Lynch. He treats the city as a macro-form, from a perspective which does not exhaust the question of how people, as he says, "read" the city: Lynch 1977/1960.

[75] This is one implication of Merleau-Ponty's *écart*, compare chapter one, first section.

[76] On implacement, see Casey 1993, 3-21.

[77] Compare Arnheim 1972/1969, 53.

[78] For this term, see Casey 1993, 286.

[79] This corresponds to Bergson's ideas, described and developed by Deleuze; Deleuze 1994/1966, also 1986 and 1989.

[80] An excellent example, in contemporary architecture, is the house designed by Glenn Murcutt which alone survived the great fires in Australia.

[81] Famous examples of culturally unsuccesful design are Le Corbusier's administrative centre in Chandigarh, India, and the Pruitt-Igoe housing blocks in the United States. Both represent modernist architecture, which applied universalist criteria. On Pruitt-Igoe, see Blake 1977, 33, 154-155, or Jencks 1978, 9.

[82] See also chapter five.

[83] Compare Sallis 1994, 9. On various meanings of 'nature', see Lovejoy 1948, 69-77. For two related but different notions of 'earth', see Rolston 1994, 203-236 and Sallis 1995, 37-55.

[84] The Latin word *cultura* comes from the verb *colere*, to cultivate. This sense is still present in the French language, see, for example, *Grand Larousse Encyclopédique en dix volumes*, 1960, 709-710. This meaning is noted by Heidegger and integrated as one central aspect in his understanding of building as dwelling, Heidegger 1954, 147; see also Casey 1993, 172-176 and 229-230 or Bloch 1989/1988, 43.

[85] This is also Merleau-Ponty's view in his later work; compare the *chiasm* in Merleau-Ponty 1991/1964, 268, 316-319, 321-322, 328, or Merleau-Ponty 1995.

[86] Arendt 1958, 150. Compare J.S. Mill on nature as "what takes place without (...) the voluntary and intentional agency of man", quoted in Attfield 1994, 45; also von Wright, as noted in chapter five.

[87] Some architects have defended the view that nature should not be thought of as existing outside culture or as the radical opposite of culture. Among these is Alvar Aalto, who saw architecture's central tasks as making the most of what nature offers and protecting human beings from both natural and cultural evils and threats; Aalto 1941, 78-79.

[88] Heidegger 1954, 146, 149, 157, 161-162.

[89] Heidegger 1954, 146-148, 152, 161.

[90] Compare Wittgenstein 1963/1921, 89 (section 5.6.).

[91] A development of 'in-between' as a central epistemological and ontological notion is found in Asenjo 1988, especially 44-60.

Chapter four

ARCHITECTURE EXPERIENCED

Architecture is an art of movement.[1]

In this chapter I discuss aspects in which architecture and in general built spaces are experienced as having meaning and significance, first more systematically, under the headings of atmosphere, expression, and function, then through examples where the interrelations between these aspects becomes evident. The headings can be seen as forming a spectrum from less to more established and defined aspects, beginning with sense and moving towards meaning[2], but it must be remembered that such a spectrum conceals other differences.

Some additional aspects to what was said earlier on meaning must be pointed out. One may discuss and analyze the meaning, or meanings, of a built complex, but in doing this one has not yet described whether and in which ways the complex is experienced as having meaning. In this perspective, historical meaning is a potential which is not necessarily actualized. Actualized or experienced meaning is what is accessible and - for reasons that vary - foregrounded in experience. In situated experience meaning is fused with sense. We not only have knowledge about, for example, what the design was meant to express, or about historical events and present activities, we also stand in a particular relation to this knowledge. The relation is suggested by the environment but transformed by the experiencer according to his values. Social background, personal experiences and world view importantly influence how we perceive and relate to a concentration camp, a low-income housing area or an opera house, to mention some examples.[3] For these and other reasons, the sum total of the potential meaning of an environment remains an interpretive construction. It does not form a totality that could be the aim of an ideal interpretation, for the total meaning is inevitably a result of basic choices about which features are essential.

Experienced environmental meaning is never objective if that would imply being part of an environment regardless of experience. Therefore, it is also not unchanging or independent of history. Environmental meaning is generated and maintained in a social context. This is the point of the notion of an urban collective memory[4], which must not be taken to imply the existence of a collective subject. Particularly a complex habitat, such as a city, is not a homogeneous entity or an organism where all parts hang together, but a looser set of structures, some related, some unrelated to each other - parallel, but not in touch. The city exists in openness and spatial simultaneity, with the proximity of functions, people, artefacts and institutions in a geographically defined area, not as based on a specific narrative. This is a condition of its richness. Memory and identity are plural and dynamic. Therefore the discussion of aspects of meaning and the examples given towards the end of this chapter are equally necessary. Since meaning does not exist outside life forms and buildings, outside the practices and narratives of real life, the latter are more than illustrations. The meaning of the environment is a meaning in the environment; it is dependent on the subject and on his embeddedness in a social context.

I start with atmosphere, which relates to the idea of affective or felt space[5]. But although atmosphere is in one sense a first dimension of environment - immediately and directly encountered - this should not be overemphasized, for the atmosphere of a particular building is influenced by our knowledge of the building's function and history. With this in mind, to proceed from less articulated, conceptualized and conscious significance to the more articulated seems to do better justice to actual environmental experience - as opposed to a formal analysis - than would starting with historical and social facts.

Atmosphere is experienced in particular situations. Thus it is not simply the most inclusive perspective on the experience of the built environment, but also a strongly subjective one, which does not make it irrelevant for the more overtly public dimensions. The atmosphere of a building frames the activities that take place in it. A sacred atmosphere makes a church a proper context for worshipping, and even if this atmosphere is not necessary for the performance of certain activities, it might be crucial for successful performance. As expression, atmosphere is related to the modality of being rather than doing. An emotional state or a mood is, with Paul Ricoeur, "a specific manner of being in the world and relating oneself to it, of understanding it and interpreting it"[6].

The step from atmosphere to expression, the theme of the second section, is short, and one should bear in mind the interdependence of atmosphere and expressive elements, which can be seen in terms of the relation between space and the objects that constitute it[7]. Expressive features of design mediate between the *what* and the *how* of a building and are therefore important for the understanding of function. They also influence the ways in which buildings are used[8]. Further, since expressive features and atmosphere are emergent and basically experienced on the spot, they are dependent on a situation which includes natural elements and conditions. In buildings, character often arises in an interplay between nature and culture.

If atmosphere and expression belong to the more passive modes of existence, functional meaning belongs to the modality of doing. Functionality in buildings comprises constructional and social functions: how the elements of a building serve the building and how the building serves human needs. These two main functional aspects correspond to Vitruvius's criteria of firmness and utility, where aesthetic merit should be seen as a quality that can be part of both[9]. But these criteria might tempt us to look at buildings and built spaces as objects on display rather than as inhabited environments. In order to avoid this it is useful to distinguish between intended functions and actual use. In the latter, the unplanned and the individual

become relevant, for actual use is not just a collective matter, it is also an important perspective on individual experience. Further, there is a connection between social patterns of use and personal appropriation, through which the environment is experienced not only as meaningful but also as mine[10].

In addition to constructional and social functions buildings have representative functions. Although architecture is an abstract art, it represents social and political institutions by embodying and re-presenting them. I discuss this partly through the idea of authorial meaning, which is related to both the origin of a building and to its present use, and which I see as a subcategory of functional meaning. Both construction and maintenance are relevant in this respect: there is always some agent, a person or an institution, who holds power over the building. That agent, rather than the designer or the particular users of the building, is interesting in the public context. Authorial meaning is more than an author's meaning, and the connotations of authority are certainly relevant.

Atmosphere

When places - cities, squares, public buildings or apartments - are characterized by visitors, the characterization often includes words like 'friendly', 'gay', 'oppressive' or 'gloomy'. These qualities refer to the atmosphere of the place, which is experienced as an overall quality. This gives rise to some remarks. First, the characterizations are typically articulated in aesthetic terms, which include an element of feeling whose application requires perceptual sensitivity and skill[11]. Second, the object characterized is a phenomenal aspect of the place, rather than some property or feature of the building as a formal composite or material object. Third, and as a consequence of the previous point, altering features and conditions in the particular situation of experience play a crucial role for the atmosphere. But, fourth, although conditions and situations are transient, a place can have characteristic qualities or an atmosphere that is experienced as representative and permeating.

I shall discuss some implications of these remarks at the end of this section, but to start with, I take them as premises. Another question related to atmosphere, namely the status and meaning of such designations - what do we say when we say that the harbour is gloomy or the square solemn? - shall be dealt with in the next section, where I discuss expression by relating it to affectivity and function. The central question here is whether there are grounds and if so, of what kind, for describing a place in terms of atmosphere, understood on a preliminary basis as a synthetic, but importantly affective dimension of environment which is experienced as part of an object or a space by a perceiver who is present to it.

I first approach atmosphere as affective space and give a tentative description of what I call the quality of 'space'[12]. Here not only the anonymous and unarticulated, but also tacit and subsidiary experience are relevant. That affective strata are unarticulated does not mean, however, that they are beyond language. As a second theme I shall discuss the mediation of these primarily nondiscursive dimensions in certain forms of discourse, notably poetic and aesthetic. Although we often do not focus on atmosphere in communication, it is not in an absolute sense beyond it. If this dimension of environmental experience cannot be conceptually mastered, certain forms of language and expression nonetheless make it intersubjectively accessible.

To Merleau-Ponty the affective dimension is, as we have seen, a primordial dimension of human experience. It is also more strongly spatial and spatial in a different way, as compared to the cognitive and practical spheres. In relating cognitively or practically to the world, we tend to identify objects and functions and to order the world as a set of entities or structures for contemplation or a set of possibilities for action[13] . Space is understood as relations between identified objects. For example, in Helsinki such a spatial relation connects my home and the university. In the affective dimension space is, on the contrary, primarily atmosphere or ambiance: a space of being. Compared to the areas of knowing and doing, affective space is open. Since it is not defined and structured through projects, it is also wider and more generous, and its temporality unfolds rather than progresses.

If affective space is always around us as embodied beings, this does not mean that we are equally present or sensitive to it. We may, for example, be absorbed by intellectual work. Sometimes we experience the atmosphere of a place strongly, at other times barely at all. However, although affective space and atmosphere are related, it would be too hasty to collapse them into each other. Gernot Böhme describes the atmosphere of an object as comprising all the appearances or ways in which the object has presented itself[14] . To perceive or sense atmosphere is a synthetic and interactive process. There is an appearing object or environment, but also a subject who is present to it and therefore takes part in its atmosphere; the emphasis on personal presence is worth noting.[15] In a sense the experience of atmosphere is, then, always the experience of a particular affective quality. This quality is synthetically produced by what appears, so that it is contextual, concrete and individual as opposed to general and abstract.

If we feel atmosphere more or less strongly, it is perhaps worth venturing some reflections on this. Such an approach to atmosphere and affective space may be suggestive of the contribution of atmosphere to the quality of the human habitat. Referring to the suggestion that the affective dimension is more open and generous and less defined than the practical and cognitive, I use the term 'space', instead of atmosphere, throughout these reflections and refer to it as a positive quality of the environment[16] . I am aware that it does not cover all aspects and kinds of atmosphere, but I want to emphasize the freedom of this level of experience. While an atmosphere must not be dense or intense to be significant, the word is typically used to suggest such meanings. In reflecting on space, not atmosphere, for some pages, I try to give some air to the idea.

Importantly, the significance of space is that it has no particular significance, although it affords possibilities for social life and for community. Community is then "not a substance that is shared, but a dynamic movement of sharing"[17] ; an unspecified gathering or being-together of people that are different. For the experience of space, both the spatial and the functional organization of a building or an area are relevant. Space exists in areas which are not claimed by authorities, institutions or groups, where the functions are not strictly defined and which therefore belong to no one in particular. Also in this sense, space is free space, open space, in between. Space may exist on streets, in parks, in shopping malls, in railway stations, in harbours, market places, backyards, pubs, or swimming halls. It belongs in areas which afford possibilities for action, but without forcing people to act or to act in certain way, and where there is the possibility for activities which were not planned in advance. Space comes with lingering: standing, sitting, abiding, looking around, pausing or waiting for something or for nothing in particular[18] . It is related to dwelling, particularly if the aspect of abiding is stressed; space gives room for dwelling with other people, but also with local nature[19] .

But space does not always have a social character. Among areas where space prevails one finds wasteland, desolated industrial areas or buildings, a business district at night or a red light district in the morning. The point, here, is not to romantically see the city as a wilderness, which is no necessary corollary of the experience of space. The sense of getting away from the world of everyday work is, however, relevant: a feeling which nature often provides. The point is then to get away from society as political system, law, obligations, not from other human beings. Space may be accompanied by an experience of otherness, exhilarating or alienating, or both, but it can also be felt as affirmative, reassuring. In either case, space is undemanding: there is a possible connection between that which is exciting and ordinary, strange and familiar. Both ends are at home in the unspecified, undefined, unplanned, contingent, anonymous, in that which does not tell us who or what we are or should be.

Where there is space, there is freedom: functions and life may be present, things to do and things that get done, but not according to strict rules. Space corresponds to the idea of freedom as always situated, as found only "before me, in the things"[20] . This freedom is an intimate relation, a connection, similar to the one between experienced quality and experiencer. Wide, open spaces may produce an experience of space, as I have described it, but need not do so - think only of the *Piazza San Pietro* in Rome - and on the other hand, the quality of space may be felt in a small room. A closed wall might, through its texture, suggest space by reminding us of a possibility for withdrawal and rest; an alternative to the never-ending quest for experiences and the duty of continuous explorations and explications - or trivializations - of unknown areas with which we live[21] . Experiencing space is dependent on the subject's former experiences, desires and hopes; yet it is an individual, but also anonymous experience. In space, I am liberated from the burden of what I am supposed to be. I am here, but personal identity is irrelevant.

I now turn to the elements or components of that affectively tinted, environmental anonymity which may be called 'atmosphere'. Atmosphere is in an important way dependent on tacit components of experience: on how it feels to be in a certain space, including light, humidity, temperature, smells, ground, acoustics and the exposure of one's body to air or to other people's gazes. The components which together constitute the sensuous totality of an environment are, however, mostly perceived only in a subsidiary way, so that we do not attend to them. They constitute a background, a tissue against and in which our attention moves. It may be that certain types of components typically remain in the background, while others stand out, but this is finally dependent on the interplay of experiencer and environment. Although the components of atmosphere are not present as known in the sense of being identified, the experience of atmosphere is not strange in the way a metropolis may be strange for a person with a rural background, or natural wilderness to an urbanite. In the experience of atmosphere, there is a familiarity and immediacy even in the horrifying, for the tacit components are felt through the body, directly accessible and basic to any form of human life.

A reason why we are aware of the nondiscursive and tacit components in a subsidiary rather than focal way may be that these elements are not articulated and identified as units. They are, rather, the experienced flesh or depth of the world[22]. I experience the birds outside my open window or the sound of a car passing by as part of the tissue of this place rather than as individual occurrences which I should pay attention to or identify. The situation may change: when I listen for the bus which passes at a certain hour, the sound of any large vehicle becomes a focus of attention. Normally, the constitutive elements of atmosphere are continuous and ambient, they are not experienced as having definite beginnings or ends. The smell of coffee which meets me on the street over the spice and coffee factory is not an event that begins and is finished; it is something into which I enter. The same is true for atmospheric elements generally.

Although the components of atmosphere are not fully grasped in language, they can be evoked and suggested. Some kind of language is also necessary if we want to reflect upon or communicate the specific atmosphere of situations or places, but it seems that the languages best suited for these purposes are not conceptual and abstract, but poetic and metaphorical forms of discourse or expression, including other art forms than literature. The nondiscursive dimensions of environmental experience can be mediated in poetic and aesthetic discourse, which make this experience intersubjectively accessible to some extent, but not graspable. Further, successful communication demands that the interlocutor is experienced in certain ways, sensuously, emotionally. For atmosphere, as felt, which is how it is known, demands

interaction and openness but also resists projective understanding. It cannot be enough emphasized that its basis is in human experience on a level before, but in fact also after, discursive articulation and mediation. Language is not self-generative: meaning arises in intersections which are influenced by language, but not by language alone. Humans live in language but also in actions, situations, environment, with others and in bodies.

To take up the question of language and of the specific features of a particular atmosphere is inevitably to touch upon the relation of atmosphere to the social, historical, present-day functional as well as more individual semantic strata of a place. How does atmosphere influence and become influenced by the social and historical character of a place? This question recalls the question of the identity of self and place, for knowledge is specification, and sooner or later one has to face identity, in spite of or because of the emphasis on anonymity. The 'worldly' aspect of affectivity, that it is actually the world that in becoming manifest comes to be, may be more difficult to accept than the idea that we simply appropriate the world by 'feeling for' or 'feeling with' it. Whereas appropriation can be understood on a basis of projection, the becoming of the world cannot. Before looking at functional specifications of atmosphere, there is reason to look at one attempt to explain affectivity as an experiential and ontological fact.

According to Mikel Dufrenne, in the area of affectivity and expression, which belong together, we have to do with the atmosphere of a world, not with the world in any objective sense[23]. With the affective *a priori* he hoped to show that our experience of worlds expressed, as opposed to represented, by works of art is reliable.[24] One of the aims of this notion is to criticize and enlarge the scope of Kant's transcendental philosophy. Dufrenne criticizes Kant for describing the *a priori* as relevant only to the forms of experience, where it should be seen as relevant also for the material side of the world. To posit it as relevant to consciousness but not to things is too idealistic: the idea of an *a priori* should comprise not only knowledge and representation, but also presence and feeling. If the Kantian *a priori* makes cognition possible, Dufrenne wants to guarantee the accuracy of a more direct understanding, and if the Kantian *a priori* gives access to the world as it appears, Dufrenne's enlargement suggests contact and attunement of humans with the world that appears.[25]

Dufrenne is convinced of the attunement of human being and world, but also conscious of the difficulty of the attempt to explain their unity. For example, he is conscious of a gap between the generality of the affective categories and the individuality of actual affective qualities, and states that the latter can "only imperfectly" be subsumed under the former[26]. However, the assumption of affective categories is problematic. As I shall try to show, here Dufrenne actually falls short of his defence of the materiality and sensuousness of the world, for understood as a category - which must be at least to some extent precise and defined - affective quality becomes modelled on and defended as a form of rationality. In spite of the searched-for unity, the model is basically dualistic, since it posits subject and object as initially separate although uniting and equipped with an identical structure, the *a priori*. The affective category is taken to exist autonomously in subject and object before experience: this, not that two poles of experience are presupposed, is the problem. It means that there is actually similarity rather than unity, harmony, but not interdependence. In the final instance, the model becomes abstract, for to Dufrenne, the accord is not simply about human embodiment and the sensuousness of the world, but about particular qualities which he takes to be given. Here dualism and stasis go hand in hand.

If we presume that atmosphere exists and can be experienced in a way that is more than idiosyncratic, an alternative explanation can be developed, drawing on the idea of perception as interaction, discussed in chapter one. I call this the 'synthesizing model'. The experienced affective quality can then be understood only relative to the situation of interaction. Affective quality is synthetic and yet particular, it is influenced by sensuousness but also informed by former experiences as well as by discursive articulations and distinctions. The way we feel is dependent on our situation, in all its aspects, and on how we act and react in the situation. The affective quality is therefore both real and made. It can be named, but a verbal description cannot define it. This is one reason why artistic expression and aesthetic appreciation illuminate this area better than discursive analysis. Another is the importance of being experienced for understanding affectivity, where the aesthetic mode offers at least a training. The synthesizing model cannot accommodate affective categories in Dufrenne's sense, which either exist independently from experience or not at all, but it may accept the '*a priori* of the *a priori*', understood as our innate capacity to experience the world affectively.

However, if art is a privileged area of affectivity, then Dufrenne in fact grants a place for creation in establishing the expressed world. The affective category of a work of art originates in the creative process of the artist; the work of art is undoubtedly a created object. But the audience's experience starts in a situation of separateness, which can be bridged only thanks to a pre-existing structure. A problem also arises for the environment, if art is privileged, for the reason for the privilege is that behind the object there is a particular human subjectivity. Objects of nature, or situations where there is no individual human creator, are then seen as mere 'brute' reality. In the synthesizing model nothing in the world of human experience is absolutely brute. Even the supposed radical strangeness of *there is* is quickly compromised by characterization.

The value of Dufrenne's suggestion is its emphasis on affective bonds, or affectivity as bonding, between human and world, not that it applies Kant's transcendentalism to the area of feeling, which may be impossible. The synthesizing model supposes that our existence, at any moment, is an unfinished product of exploratory and performatory activities in interaction with the environment[27]. To postulate affective categories introduces a fundamentalism in our understanding of persons, situations and expressive

objects, as if a given, independently existing quality would pervade the whole, give it character and function as its base. Also Dufrenne's statement that the affective is related to a world of expression rather than to an expressed world points away from categories, towards activity, rather than towards the articulated. That expression "can be analyzed only to the extent that it first escapes analysis", does not require that it has a pre-given character.[28]

If one abandons the idea of affective categories, the cord of the world of expression and the represented world is also loosened, which is relevant for the environment. For art, this means that there is no precise and given relation between, say, our understanding of one of Goya's paintings of the Spanish Civil War and our affective response; there is no one specified affective category that must and will enter and ground experience. This is not to say that there are no typical and representative affective responses, which would include, for example, such elements as shock, sorrow, grief, anger, despair.[29] But the affective dimension of experiencing the work of art would be in part dependent on how and from what perspective we understand the work and its context. The 'Goya quality' does not exist as untouched by viewers, by worldly matters, conditions and contexts of individuals in historical situations. The quality is named and becomes an object of reflection only through an articulating understanding, which is codependent upon historical conditions.

When Dufrenne develops the idea of poetic creation as articulation and creation in interdependence with Nature, this brings forth the interaction and seriousness of creation not *ex nihilo*, but from an evolving and existing reality[30]. In poetry, it seems, affective quality is not based in language, yet it does not exist independently from language, and it can also not be extracted or taken out from the text. Poetic, creative language makes manifest, as a sign of the subjectivity and creativity behind it, a creativity which is individual and yet part of Nature, the fundamental, encompassing creative force. Atmosphere is, in the synthesizing model, close to poetry, for it is also articulation, although not verbal. Elements of reflection are coexistent with a feeling relation[31], but reflection is here not cognitive mastery, which aims at identification or definition. In being experienced or perceived, emotions and affective qualities are articulated[32], given a form, although this form is foreign to rational discursivity, partly due to the dynamic character of emotion.

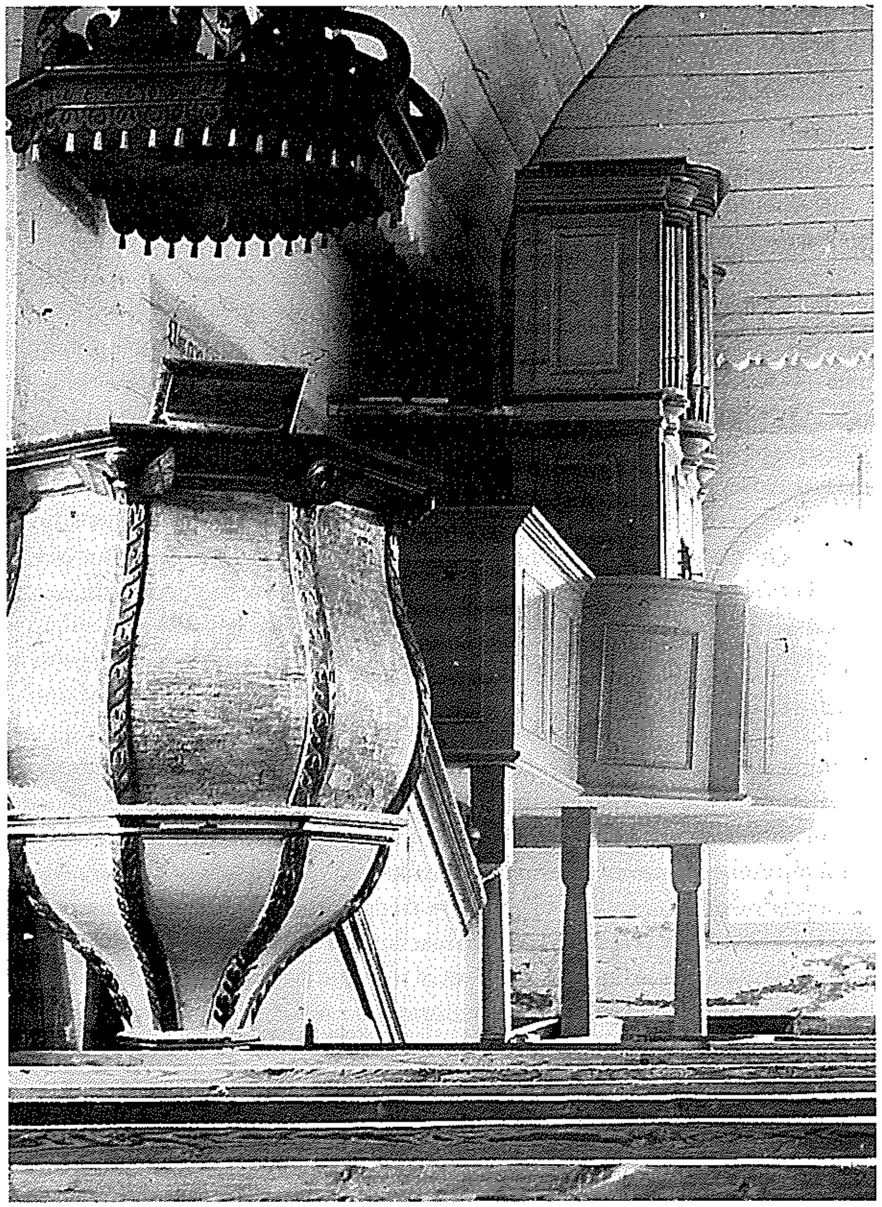
The subject who experiences and articulates an affective quality is in the situation. This may illuminate why affective qualities, as the subject of art, are conveyed rather than depicted, for the artist is, while creating, 'in' the quality rather than before it. In art, the audience is before the work, but in the environment, the subject is situated in space. Affective spaces may approach affective states, which does not mean that we in feeling an environment would delve into ourselves[33]. Being inside is, however, a perspective on the close relation of mood and atmosphere, which can illuminate the tendency to see these through each other. To relate expression to moods or manners also suggests that perceiver and perceived, subject and object are, in the experience, in touch[34].

There are some other interesting consequences of loosening the cord between expression and representation for understanding atmosphere. Environments are, as has been noted, heterogeneous in many ways: their character is dependent on the subject's experience and knowledge, and their precise appearance on changing conditions. Atmosphere not only permeates a place in all its aspects of experienced and known, but is also influenced by these. A place cannot, strictly speaking, have an unchanging character. If the world of expression is a presence and a relation in which we are and which we inhabit, this means that the environment appears mediated by both culture and personal experience, which co-constitute it. If the subjective is no less real than the objective it equally shapes and gives existence to things.[35]

Atmosphere is, although intimate, also public and shared, and thus it includes a social dimension. The social character of public spaces is prepared by atmosphere, which is in part independent of the social and historical role of the institution. On the other hand, as elements of atmosphere, the social merges with the natural in its appearances. The atmosphere of a city has more to do with the sound of footsteps on the pavement, the speed of traffic, the tones of voices, with how people confront each other, than with precise information about the city. There is not one single element we could put our finger on to identify the ambiance of a habitat. Also in public spaces, atmosphere is experienced as being around, as a quasi-subjectivity of the space or place, rather than as a feature of any object[36]. To call a space sombre is not to suppose that there is a personal spirit who inhabits it. On the other hand, if gloominess belongs to a school building, it will be experienced as belonging to that particular institution. All in all, there is a sense in which our affective relation to the world is animating: the world is seen as inhabited and habitable, alive and processual[37]. And although to feel the 'soul' of a space does not imply a perception or projection of a personal spirit, it might very well be related to a felt vitality or capacity of life of that space[38].

The emphasis on subjectivity and anonymity in affective experience, combined with the heterogeneity of environments, can be illuminated by Levinas' idea of proximity, which questions coincidence[39]. His thinking, where the other is transcendent but also encountered through an actual 'face' can open fruitful perspectives on the built environment, understood as both my home and shared with unknown others, inhabited and strange, natural and cultural, present and historically sedimented. Proximity implies a vivid consciousness of the other as near to me but not known; the other summons me, awakens response and responsibility, makes me react and makes me sensitive to ethics. Although Levinas' thinking is centred on human relations, the other, in whose proximity we are, need not be a person. The naked arm of a sculpture can have a similar effect[40].

To continue, admittedly beyond Levinas, in environmental experience there is plenty of ethically relevant otherness: traces of people who went



atmosphere Thorvald Lindquist's archive away, sounds of people we cannot see, signs telling that someone can be expected. These are not always expressive, and yet they are mostly not without affective import: they suggest how things are done, how life is lived, not just that activities take place. It is certainly true, in any case, that the knowing relevant to environmental experience is sensuous, embodied and sensitive, rather than conceptually grasping. I do not know, in any strict sense, the place I walk through, and I do not have an atmosphere as I can have facts about construction or history. Atmosphere is evanescent and can be felt only if one yields to it: I give myself to the atmosphere, rather than the other way, and this would be analogous to Levinas' scheme.

Affectivity is not stable, but fluctuating. It is in motion that the world appears for us and becomes ours, that area and location acquire a character and are felt as place. In this sense, affective experiences, although ephemeral, are, together with our knowledge about the place, constitutive of what the place is for us. In this area, there is no clear-cut division between appearance and reality, between the seeming and the factual, although there are differences between shallow and deeper understanding. Feeling the atmosphere takes place in a concrete space populated by meaningful elements. If atmosphere permeates these elements, it would also not be there without them, and it does not cover them but makes them appear in a certain way. The spirit of a place does not hold power over it, but is its breath. But as the elements of a place are not eternal, its identity is in process: developing, continuous.

Expression

Turning now to expression in buildings, I shall assume that it can be understood as taking up a position between affectivity and function. I mentioned the relationship between affectivity and manners earlier, and I shall make some further reflections on this towards the end of the present section. The notion of manners implies that we have to do with how things are done, but there is also, notably with functional artefacts in everyday contexts, the question of what is done: the question of a potential or actual function. Functional artefacts have a performative dimension which is present as a backdrop to our understanding even when we do not focus on it. For this reason, expression in architecture involves both affectivity and function. Whether the latter is relevant to expression generally is a separate, albeit related question; but a negative answer does not make function irrelevant in the present context.

In comparison to atmosphere, architectural expression is less about space and more about objects. Expression is more reified and has a more independent standing in relation to subjective experience: it is more firmly anchored in objects, which are perceived as bearers of expression[41] . I shall not at this point anticipate the discussion of function of the next two sections, but I would like to mention that there is a what to the how of expression,

related either to the construction or to the use of the building. I proceed by commenting upon three theoretical approaches to expression in art which also explicitly discuss architecture: those of Rudolf Arnheim, Susanne K. Langer and Nelson Goodman. These approaches suggest that besides affective, there are cognitive and practical aspects of expression. Towards the end of this section, I shall deal with the question of the subject(s) of expression: with whose feeling or stance the building expresses and how communication takes place, if it does.

In Arnheim's discussions of the dynamics of forms, perception and perceiving-as are absolutely central. This does not single him out among writers on aesthetics, but whereas many authors discuss these matters only on a general level, Arnheim, who is a professional psychologist, discusses individual examples in detail. His work is therefore more substantial and suggestive than purely philosophical studies. It also leaves more space for reflection between observations and argument. In *The Dynamics of Architectural Form* the emphasis is on the conditions and prerequisites of contextual, historical and social meaning rather than on this meaning as such. Arnheim points to the elements and structures of perception that make architectural symbolism possible.[42] On the other hand, his central idea of visual thinking challenges the primacy of linguistic over other expressive and communicative means. Therefore the meaning of visual forms is not a more narrow field of semantics or philosophy than the question of language, on the contrary. Visual or, actually, spatial, three-dimensional abstract thinking is, to Arnheim, basic to other human forms of understanding. This universal language of forms is a foundation, not a supplement, to discursive thinking. Understanding always presupposes the ability to perceive relations and structures, which include emotional import.[43]

The idea that "all shapes are experienced as patterns of forces" is suggestive with respect to architecture[44] . It suggests a connection of forms and functions in how things are seen and offers a ground for the argument that forms are, intersubjectively, pregnant with sense. Still it avoids the fundamentalism of the idea of 'pure form' or form as such. In the following quotation, Arnheim connects the functionality of form to qualities of social behaviour. Note also that this kind of meaning permeates perception in general.

> *One cannot describe the dynamic qualities of shapes without at the same time invoking their spontaneous symbolism. Functions such as receiving, containing, and dispensing are by no means limited to vases, or to physical activities more generally, but are immediately relatable also to fundamental aspects of human social behavior, to qualities like generosity and exploitation, acquisitiveness, stinginess, husbandry, etc. It is my contention that these symbolic overtones accompany perception not only in rare moments of aesthetic contemplation but whenever we look at an object and handle it with some involvement of our natural sensitivity.*[45]

Arnheim specifies that the symbols described here are open symbols, which "do not signify specific applications but rather refer to the broad range of possible examples for which the generic perceptual properties stand". The idea is that the form of an object, such as a Greek vase, a gate, or a church, can embody general functions like the ones listed above: receiving, containing, dispensing. But in addition to embodying a function, and in fact inseparably, the perceived form also embodies a certain way of doing something. The physical aspects of the functions "are only items of practical information, which contribute 'subject matter' to the visual dynamics of the image". The properties dealt with "belong to activities rather than things"; they are "adverbial rather than adjectival".[46]

In connecting cognition and expression, so that when we perceive what something is, we simultaneously perceive how it is, or "what kind of thing it is", Arnheim indicates a bridge between subject and object[47]. Understanding phenomena through how they appear to us is understanding the world, but this understanding is developed in perceptual interaction with the world. The world we understand is necessarily the world as it is for us, which does not make it any less real. On the other hand, what we understand is by no means only the world; the world, rather, offers materials for understanding ourselves and structures with the help of which we can generally understand.

> *All genuine metaphors derive from expressive shapes and actions in the physical world. We speak of "high" hopes and "deep" thoughts, and it is only by analogy to such elementary qualities of the perceivable world that we can understand and describe non-physical properties. A work of architecture, as a whole and in its parts, acts as a symbolic statement, which conveys, through our senses, humanly relevant qualities and situations.*[48]

If this is accepted, at least two things follow. First, to inquire after a subjective or objective character of expression is meaningless. Second, there is always an expressive potential of buildings and built spaces. Of course this does not mean that all problems of expression in architecture are solved. A problem of criticism remains, for example, since it is not evident that expressive features can easily be communicated in words. More importantly, the situations in which we perceive and experience buildings are highly complex, often multicontextual, and might include contradictory suggestions. Arnheim's examples are very useful, but they may be too pure as compared to the impurity of real environments.

According to Arnheim, architecture is a continuation and an embodiment of human behaviour, expressive of the relation between humans and environment. Buildings display "the variety of attitudes man brings to the challenges of his existence"[49]. Again there is an emphasis on activity as the basic mode of being in the world: attitudes accompany action or are the bases from which we are ready to act in certain ways. From this perspective, feelings or moods are not free-floating, gratuitous states of being, for they are part of the continuum of experience: as sequels or preparations for action or as parts of the *how* aspect of behaviour. A feeling can be repressed, as sometimes happens in polite behaviour, but on the other hand politeness can foster more gentle feelings towards other people than unrestrained behaviour. This indicates an interdependence of behaviour and feeling and the possibility to cultivate one's feelings.

Like Arnheim's, Langer's view on expression is related to a psychological frame of reference, although it is closer to philosophy of mind and philosophy of art[50]. Langer first developed her theory of art as a theory of music, in *Philosophy in a New Key*, and it could perhaps be expected that she would treat architecture as an abstract form of art, but this is not the case. For Langer, the key concept in architecture is 'ethnic domain', which she describes as "the sphere of influence of a function, or functions", understood broadly as a certain way of life. A camp, which might change its physical location, culturally is a place, and a place "in this non-geographical sense, is a created thing, an ethnic domain made visible, tangible, sensible".[51] This ethnic domain is expressed rather than represented:

> *as the actual environment of a being is a system of functional relations, so a virtual "environment," the created space of architecture, is a symbol of functional existence. This does not mean, however, that signs of important activities (...) play any part in its significance. (...) Symbolic expression is something miles removed from provident planning or good arrangement.* ***It does not suggest things to do, but embodies the feeling, the rhythm, the passion or sobriety, frivolity or fear with which things at all are done.*** *That is the image of life which is created in buildings; it is the visible semblance of an "ethnic domain," the symbol of humanity to be found in the strength and interplay of forms.*[52]

Langer is not very clear on how symbolic expression is communicated, but seems to take it for granted. The experience of art is, according to her, universal and cross-cultural. But even if we admit that this is true at least for certain kinds of art - and it is not my ambition to take a stance on this question here - a basic and rather concrete question remains: what kind of appreciation is needed to understand, for example, the place as an expression of an ethnic domain? Evidently, there are situations when we do not understand, when the environment remains mute. Here Langer's general view on the relations of forms and feelings might be helpful. When a form is symbolic of human feeling, it means that the expressive object, which acts as a symbol, enables the experiencer to form an abstraction[53]. The emphasis is on the activity of the subject, without which the object would not function as a symbol at all. One could perhaps say that the symbol - a building, a novel, a painting, a piece of music - offers affordances for feeling, an opening into a certain world which primarily is an expressed world, a way of being. But it seems that to attend to architecture, understood as ethnic domain, would require more than contemplation: a testing of the building which would include at least some practical activity. It might be added that the sphere of influence of a function is hardly understandable without former experiences of similar functions, of having been in a certain kind of situations, behaved and acted in certain ways.

In this interpretation of Langer, expression in architecture is about places to be in more than of objects to look at. In the third perspective on expression, Goodman's, this is not the case, but they share an emphasis on symbol[54]. Goodman considers expression in architecture from the same point of view as he considers symbols in art generally. The symbol is primarily seen as a separate entity, which is also separate from the particularities of situation and place[55]. But although his perspective is abstract, it is clarifying, and one of the virtues of his theory is that it illuminates how objects can function symbolically even when a code is not known. I shall return to the points that need to be complemented, but first present his general ideas on expression, especially in architecture.

Art is, to Goodman, cognitively valuable; his favourite perspective on art is in terms of reference. The work of art functions as a symbol in different ways where the two main alternatives are denotation and exemplification. Expression is defined as metaphorical exemplification[56]. While in a relation of literal exemplification an object exemplifies a property it literally possesses, in metaphorical exemplification the object exemplifies a property it metaphorically possesses. Here is an example from architecture:

> *An architectural work may of course both literally exemplify some properties and express others. Of the facade of San Miniato al Monte outside Florence, Rudolph Arnheim writes that it "expresses its character as a self-contained object dependent on (...) the earth; but it also symbolizes the human mind's struggle for maintaining its own centered integrity against the interference by outer powers". In my vocabulary, the facade* ***exemplifies*** *the first (literal) property and* ***expresses*** *the second (metaphorical) one.*[57]

This example is interesting for two related reasons. One is that it comments upon an existing interpretation of a building. The other is that the difference between literal and metaphorical exemplification as it appears through this example is relative, not absolute. It is easy to agree that the expressed - Arnheim would say symbolized - content, the human mind's struggle, is not literally, but metaphorically exemplified by the building. It is less clear that the building's character as a "self-contained object dependent on the earth" is literally possessed and exemplified by it. Is not this property also, as the other, dependent on a certain culture, a discourse, a way of looking at things? By using an existing description, Goodman avoids interpretation - probably without intention - which would force him to reflect more on the line between literal and metaphorical properties, exemplification and expression, as applied to actual buildings.

Probably the line between exemplification and expression is a line drawn in water. This does not mean that the distinction is useless, or that there are no cases where one can agree, without much hesitation, on literal or metaphorical status. It can be objected that it is unfair to pay so much attention to the example, so I shall test another which might be simpler and clearer, St Peter's Basilica in Rome. This building is huge, so it certainly exemplifies bigness, or one could say greatness, magnitude, or superhuman scale. Already these fairly simple words, however, suggest a world view. Especially in a cathedral, greatness or the superhuman leads our thoughts upwards, in the same direction metaphorical exemplification would lead us, for example the idea that the cathedral expresses God's power and the glory of heaven. It may still be objected that churches, as a building type, are particularly susceptible to assignments of world views. This is true, but the relativity of the difference between literal and metaphorical exemplification would hold for factories or housing blocks as well. In fact, the functionality of buildings, which is one of their necessary features, gives all descriptions of literal expression a metaphorical ring. Properties of buildings are properties of building types, which belong in society. Therefore, whatever a building is, it is also *as* an exemplification of some view of the organization of human life.

But if interpretation, including different contexts and decisions on relevance, is present in our understanding of expressed properties, it can be asked to what extent buildings really possess such properties. Are the expressed properties dependent on the interpreter, his background knowledge and interests, and if so, to what extent? The problem with Goodman is not that he overlooks interpretation; in fact he presents constructive relativism as an alternative to absolutist and deconstructive views on interpretation[58]. But in his discussion of expression in architecture he is unaffected by considerations of interaction and processes as constitutive of our understanding of the object, which is problematic if the building is seen in its context and as part of an environment. In Goodman's model, the object remains separate, cut off from lived space and time. This is reinforced by the quotation from Arnheim, whose interpretation can in this context be read as an example of a strategy which tries to fix and save meaning for eternity by placing it outside time, explaining rather than understanding[59]. Goodman does not address the task of interpretation, only its results.

Reference, as discussed by Goodman, is a conceptually stable relation, a relation between contents that can be named. But environmental meaning is only relatively stable[60]. To map the routes of reference as relations of symbols and signifieds presupposes that symbols are already there, which might not be the case in the environment. The constitution and generation of meaning, including imagination and evaluation, are processual activities which cannot be studied in abstraction. To study the languages of art without taking into account the use and praxis of these languages leads astray. That expression is studied by Goodman from the point of view of cognition harmonizes with the static character of his model. But even if it is true that there can be expression without emotion, the point that expression may have cognitive value should not be allowed to conceal or wipe out the affective component.

Goodman's insight, that the aesthetic and the cognitive are not separated, becomes a blindness if, as Richard Shusterman puts it, "aesthetic value gets subsumed 'under cognitive excellence'"[61]. This might imply enlarging the area of cognition, but the risk is great that the aesthetic becomes a subcategory of rationality. On the other hand, it is an insight that the aesthetic can be illuminating, that it can teach and afford possibilities for the clarification and enlarging of human understanding. Arnheim similarly connects cognition and expression, but also connects these to practices. While he takes visual and spatial form to be basic to thinking, he also acknowledges the interaction between understanding functions and using artefacts. This is facilitated by expressiveness in objects of art or of use, ranging from kitchen ware to houses. Langer's idea of symbolic form, applied to architecture, also includes practices. In her brief discussion she is sensitive to the specific relation of humans and architecture, noticing the environmental aspect: that architecture is places to live in, and that expressiveness accompanies activities as the *how* of the *what* of buildings and life.

In aesthetic expression, there are often features that resist discursive language. These features belong to the total expression and can be seen in terms of content, as when the expression is about something which is beyond words and concepts, or in terms of form, as when the expression captures a complex and unique rhythm or quality. This ineffability might be a reason why expression and emotion form a pair in philosophical aesthetics. We do not express only emotions, but other kinds of expression, of thoughts, for example, are not intriguing in the way emotion is[62]. It should be noted that the area of emotion or affectivity covers a wide range of phenomena: transitive and intransitive emotions or moods, feelings, overall features like character, manner and atmosphere, which are inextricably integrated in larger complexes. Not all these phenomena can be communicated, and communication, understood on a model of transmitting information, is not even relevant to them all.

I suggested earlier that atmosphere is around objects, in spaces, that it lingers, but is not strictly speaking a property of an object. It can be added that it has no object. In this it is similar to intransitive emotion, a notion which has been introduced in order to get around the fact that emotions in art usually do not have precise causes or objects[63]. In a work of art emotion is present, but the object does not possess emotions. Now if we talk about mood instead of emotion the problem of the lacking object goes away; however another problem, that of a lacking subject, may appear. For if a mood does not presuppose an object, it seems to demand a subject. A mood is the mood of someone, as manners are the manners of someone.

In experiencing atmosphere, it seems that there is often a postulation of subjectivity. But is this the case with objects, and could one find additional aspects? Perhaps we should take another look at the ascription of emotion. One thing to note is that if there is a qualitative, or iconic, resemblance between an angry sky and the anger a person may feel, there is also something indexical about it[64]. The angry sky portends thunder, and this is something an experienced person can "feel"[65]. The angry sky thus carries a warning that a violent storm might come. Here the ascription of mood is in fact a disguised, hypothetical forecast. Thus, the relation of affectivity and activity is not only one of proper feelings and behaviour, as when the solemn atmosphere of a space prompts us to behave accordingly; it is also relevant for our expectations about how something will behave. These aspects are not separate: our solemn behaviour is in part caused by the thought that something might happen if we do not behave properly.

As a quasi-subject, the expressive object can be seen to represent a certain stance on things in general, even a world view. If the cathedral stands as a subject, it also stands for something, which it asserts or states. But such a statement is suggestive or metaphorical, which may only make it more efficient. One cannot argue with a building. If the ascription of emotion and subjectivity to buildings is metaphorical, this does not mean that it is irrelevant to the reality in which we live. By standing in its place and representing what it represents, the building is undeniably present, and it inhabits the same world as we do, transmitting its obscure messages in a language we may not understand, but to which we have to listen. In the built environment, we have political reasons to look for and reflect on what is behind a building. A building is often, with full right, experienced as an embodiment of a social institution, wherefore the idea that the rightness of interpretation "concerns equally the rightness of works themselves as world construals"[66] becomes even more relevant.

Experiencing atmosphere or emotional expression is metaphorical, nonliteral; it is an as-if experience, and yet it is effective and real. One could also say that it is all the more effective because of its metaphoricity, for this demands that the experiencer takes on the load of interpretation and himself retells what he thinks the building tells. To yield to the atmosphere of a building or to open oneself up to its expression may be disciplining experiences. Buildings are not necessarily oppressive: they can also appear as a sympathetic and tactful background to dwelling, or appear as individuals and companions to their inhabitants. In all cases, however, to know the expression one must know the building by personal acquaintance. The as-if character of the experience of expression does not refer to a willing suspension of disbelief; on the contrary, belief is demanded, trust is necessary. One may doubt what one knows, but one cannot doubt that one tacitly comes to know something.

Functionality

In the sections on atmosphere and expression, I noted that these aspects are informed by cognitive and practical features. I shall now turn to technical, social, political and historical features of the built environment, focusing on what is present through the environment itself and leaving historical documents and fiction aside. To the extent that they are known in particular the social, historical and political facts become integrated in the experience of buildings and the whole built environment. These facts decide what the building is, and they therefore also form a basis and a context for its expression and atmosphere. If a building dominates an open place through its size, it might be experienced as big or even grand, but the quality or kind of grandeur is undecided as long as we do not know anything about the historical and present role of the building. Also the unknown building has a look, but the perceiver is ready to adjust it according to information about the building's actual role, what it really is and does.

Functionality is often connected with cognition and praxis as opposed to expression and aesthetic matters. But this is not always so. The idea that form follows function expresses not only a distinction but also a relation between the aesthetic and the practical. In functionalism this suggestion was made into a principle and presented as both a basic truth and a normative statement about building. The belief was that if function is studied properly and allowed to guide the fabrication of things and environments, beauty necessarily follows.[67] But the scope and character of function is open, and it can be understood in a number of ways. To regard the built and the natural environment together may lead to a view where function permeates buildings and nature: life is always functional. Often function is understood more narrowly as the activities the building is intended to serve. These may be expressed in terms of institutions: a church, an apartment house, a school or a factory designate the function of these buildings. This kind of function, which I shall refer to as institutional, guided Le Corbusier's studies on cities for the future[68]. The interesting point is that when he formulated ideal settings for the four main functions, living, work, leisure and transportation, he at the same time articulated the functions themselves. In fact, institutional function is never innocent, nor is it ahistorical. There is an interaction of the life of a society and its built structures, although it is not one of determinism.

The institutional function of a building may be the function it was designed for, but a building may also change its institutional function, as when factories are converted into apartments, studios or galleries. In these cases the former or original function often influences the later stage of the building not just as a physical structure, but also as history, memory, narrative or myth[69]. The institutional function is social and it could be seen as related to both the use of a building and its place in society. In this notion, I want to emphasize the latter, political aspect. Alongside institutional functions, we might speak about the social functions of buildings, which is the role they play in a community and which is more dependent on how, as opposed to for what purposes, they are used. With the social functions performance and use rather than institutional frames and political intentions are central. An important point is that the utilitarian function of buildings, their usefulness and role in the service of human life, Vitruvius's *utilitas*, cannot be approached only from the planner's perspective.

Vitruvius' second criterion for architecture, *firmitas* or firmity, is the other main semantic field of architectural function. In rationalism, technique was the central question for architecture, and the primitive hut in Marc-Antoine Laugier's treatise on architecture was seen in terms of construction. In the modernization process, architecture in search for its essence also turned to the archi-tectonic[70]. This kind of function, which I shall call constructive, was then also part of functionalism. On the whole it seems, however, that constructive function, or the tectonic side of building, has been given little attention in the twentieth century[71].

Challenges of constructive function have often provided occasions for artistic creativity. Mies van der Rohe's famous "problem of the corner" is but one example of the meeting-point of constructive function and expression. The problem was not construction as such - how to make the building stand or carry its own load - but how to make a corner which in a harmonious way presented the meeting of two walls, without the building seemingly falling apart. It can also be noted that buildings may have details which look as if they had a constructive role, while in fact they do not. It is evident that technical solutions, one should perhaps say articulations, are often more than technical. There is a margin of design, a possibility for doing otherwise even if with increased prefabrication, the margins become smaller. This margin, however small, introduces the possibility for aesthetic reflection in design and fabrication, and it is one reason for the significance of the technical side of building[72].

Institutional, social and constructive functions provide one way to analyze architectural function. It is not my intention to make a comprehensive classification, only to point out significant aspects of function. It can be noted that this tripartite division corresponds fairly well with the three axiological perspectives applied in the third part of this study. I have omitted expressive function, or beauty, Vitruvius' *venustas*, for it seems that it can and should be understood in combination with, as the excellence of, other kinds of function[73]. The school is a school in a certain way: the way people meet and children play on the yard is related to, although not dictated by, the spatial organization of the yard, its relation to the building, inside and outside, materials, colours, scale.[74] The quality of the architecture and the beauty of the whole are intimately connected to these various factors. But from the point of view of excellence, it must be noted that the three kinds of basic function may meet: the way the yard is partly covered by a roof combines with the articulation of the support of the roof to indicate something about sheltering, caring, social ideals.

The aesthetic aspect is virtually present in any part of the building. But in addition, I would like to suggest that the habitational aspect is a natural perspective on the environment - not innate as such but acquired in the process of growing up to a world and learning to get along in it. This means that a built environment, and sometimes a natural one, is often unreflectively perceived from the point of view of how one could live there, what one could do, how the place is or could be inhabited. Children tend to test the affordances of the environment through direct behaviour, running around, whereas adults rely more on imaginative testing. But on entering a hotel room one sits down, lies down on the bed, goes to the window, draws the curtains, switches on the lights, switches them off again. This perspective is there even when we are inhibited from carrying it out, and it comprises the dimensions of doing and being afforded by a room, a building, or a place. These habitational affordances are, in architecture, part of how nice it looks, that is, of aesthetic judgement.

In this basic sense, the human world is functional through and through, which is not to say that more narrowly understood functional aspects are dominant. It only means that function, broadly conceived and connected to habitation, is relevant for understanding the experience of architecture. If this notion of function is broad, I hope to have indicated that its breadth is motivated. Our interests in the environment, including more narrowly practical functions, are not incompatible with the aesthetic dimension, instead they enrich understanding. But even if they were incompatible with an aesthetic attitude, this would still not mean that events and objects from the practical sphere cannot become the objects of disinterested contemplation. Even if practical activities and aesthetic appreciation were incompatible, this would not imply that the way a building serves a function is irrelevant to it as an object of aesthetic contemplation and judgement. In addition, they are not. It can sometimes be pleasant to clean the windows instead of just looking at others who do it, but looking at others doing it is also enriched if one knows how the work feels.

Representative function

To apply an aesthetic perspective, appreciative and reflective, on technical solutions or on how a building as a whole articulates an institution, foregrounds the representative function of architecture. This is a metafunction, compared to the three basic functional perspectives discussed in the previous section, and a function architecture has only in relation to a perceiver. Representation in architecture is different from representation in figurative painting, literature, or cinema. Nevertheless, also in building, not the least through the concreteness of its historical and societal contexts, there is narrative content, stories and events which may not be known but still constitute an irreducible and opaque context. For this reason, it is not enough to

see the content of architecture - what it suggests - in terms of expression only. Further, it is through its representative function that a building, standing where it stands, is also a statement which affirms what it suggests, representing an institution.

In this section I shall first note some recent developments in aesthetics, which underline the relevance of function for the aesthetics of architecture. Then I develop the idea of representation in architecture. Further, although the present is, as I have suggested earlier, privileged in the experience of the environment as its primary context, history is also relevant for what a building stands for. Particular features of buildings or built spaces may be unknown to the perceiver, but he knows that buildings by their nature serve a function and have an origin at some point in time. Such knowledge is relied upon in the same way as perceptual faith[75]: it belongs to the constitutive features of the world and is a condition for experiencing it. This brings me to an authorial aspect of representation: buildings are not only perceived as representing something, but also as created, maintained, and represented by some agent or authority. The authorial aspect has a historical dimension which includes memory, but also oblivion. This, again, underlines the primacy of the present moment for deciding what the building culturally is.

All buildings, at least all buildings that serve some function, have representative content. It is true that Adolf Loos presented the tomb and the monument as exceptions to the pervading functionality of building, but they have, and emphatically, a memorial function[76]. If we search for exceptions to functionality among actually constructed buildings, as opposed to paper architecture, Mies van der Rohe's Barcelona pavilion might be a good candidate. The pavilion has no utilitarian function and was meant to display only itself. But this is also a function, a cultural and an institutional function related to the art of building, an idea of which it displays and thus represents. This is an extreme example, where representative function is most vulnerable to criticism, but even in this case, I still see two reasons to insist on the idea. One is that the representative aspect is part of our way of perceiving buildings as belonging somewhere, to someone, existing for some purpose or reason. Another is the complexity of the contexts into which architecture, as a public affair and as part of the world in its largest sense, is inserted. To construct a pavilion differs importantly from making a painting: while the latter may be seen in terms of personal expression, the former is never only that.

A building represents, articulates and makes manifest the institution which it houses and the activities that take place in it. Representation covers institutional and social functions, and not only what was intended, but also what the building became and becomes. However, with regard to constructive function, representation is not called for: there is no point of distinguishing representation and presentation, even if it could be done. A column carries a roof, but to say that it represents carrying, or a certain view of construction and technique, is to complicate matters beyond what is relevant. Construction is, rather, perceived as a tacit dimension of building, which expresses how things are done, rather than represents[77]. This makes its appreciation interesting and rewarding in its own way, which differs from the political and social aspects of building. A culture where construction is approached in terms of representation would be possible, but apparently we do not live in such a culture.

The seminal discussions of aesthetics in Kant and Hegel have generally been seen as hostile to the functional dimensions of architecture. But there are some recent developments and reinterpretations which emphasize the connections of art and aesthetics to the world at large, and these are fruitful to architecture. To start with Kant, several scholars have pointed to the relatedness of ethics and aesthetics in his thinking[78]. Among these, Anthony Savile's development of Kantian aesthetics is particularly useful, not the least since it explicitly discusses architecture. Generally, Savile argues that the purposelessness of the aesthetic object, which Kant demands, does not imply that the object has no function, an interpretation which differs from the widely spread alternative, according to which purposelessness is a necessary feature of the aesthetic object. 'Without purpose' should, according to Savile, be understood as a characterization of our attention, which must not be guided by specific practical or cognitive interests, since it should be open to what the particular object is. As to this object, Savile observes that "we are aware of the functionality of the thing via the pleasure it gives us, and it is in this sense that functionality is the determining ground of our judgement".[79]

Savile also comments upon Kant's description of aesthetic judgement as including that we see the object under a certain representation, that is, that we see it as the sort of thing it is[80]. Framing is therefore implied in the very process of aesthetic perception; as Karsten Harries puts it, "[a]ll beauty frames."[81]. But this is true of perception generally. As all seeing is seeing-as, a building will be perceived as such-and-such a building: as a church, a school, or an apartment house. If the building's appearance is inappropriate to its type, Savile observes that this will inhibit "the responses that would make our pleasure one that we might have good reason to recommend to others"[82]. This idea is convincing and acceptable, but there are some complications in the everyday context, where we do not always know what kind of building a building is and may be mistaken in our framing. But even if framing is undecided, as I suggested earlier, so that we are willing to adjust our frames on further information, we will mostly not abandon our former frame, our misperception, altogether. The building which was taken to be a school, but which turned out to be a dwelling, remains a school-like dwelling. It is with this totality that our notion of dwelling is compared and transformed, tested imaginatively against the building as a given structure and statement of another kind of dwelling.

That matching appearance and function constitute a criterion for judging architecture does not yet imply, however, that architecture is more than

a symbolic form of art. Interestingly, in criticizing dominant modern ideas of architecture, Savile relates it not only to institutional functions, but also to social functions and actual use. He notes that architecture is often treated as sculpture, which means that it is placed in a frame which will not do justice to what is specific for buildings. Instead, Savile defends the idea that "architecture, *as architecture*" is "the art of building-in-use". Architecture does not, then, "[act] on us ultimately symbolically. It is far more direct than that, because it affects our perceptions and does not, as symbols do, bypass perception on the way to the intellect."[83] Architecture has an influence on culture and society, for it moulds our conceptions of what the institutions in and by which we live are like. To Savile, this influence grows with the aesthetic excellence of the building:

> *the truly architectural masterpiece has to exercise its power over us through the way in which it fashions those thoughts and emotional responses of ours which impinge on the sort of activity that the particular building houses. That is, the beautiful building is beautiful through becoming an embodiment of a constellation of mental states related to the activity that the building serves*[84]

Reflecting on Hegel, Paul Crowther arrives at similar suggestions about the possibilities of a significant and relevant aesthetics of architecture. Also he expresses the view that functionality should be included in the core of the art of building, and emphasizes that the building's capacity to foreground its function is dependent on its quality. In the Hegelian framework, it is the purported lack of subject-matter in architecture that has been taken to indicate its relatively uninteresting character. As part of a neo-Hegelian theory of art Crowther, however, recommends that function in architecture should be looked at "as an analogue of subject-matter" in representational art[85]. There is another passage where he describes how a sense of the "symbolically significant" comes into play.

> *It arises when some primarily functional artefact - such as a building, or piece of furniture or ceramics - is so excellent as to make us aware of it as a distinctive way of fulfilling the function for which it was designed. In such artefacts, function is transformed into an analogue of subject-matter in representational art.*[86]

Crowther does not note the importance of actual interaction on and in aesthetic judgement, but it could be accommodated in his view. Both Savile and Crowther indicate, however, a direction where aesthetics could be more useful for an understanding of human experience and more true to that experience. It is, in addition, interesting that they argue that the wider conception of the aesthetic, one that transgresses the limits of formalism, is in line with Kantian and Hegelian thinking and thus with the origins of the discipline.

The third representative of philosophical aesthetics I want to comment upon in this context, Roger Scruton, is especially relevant for the discussion of a representative function of architecture. Scruton rejects representation as relevant to buildings, while he also defends a nonformalist view of architecture, emphasizing its connection to practical life and the public realm. His idea of representation is different and narrower than the one I want to defend. In Scruton's stipulative definition, representation is propositional. He states that "a representational work of art expresses *thoughts* about a *subject*. By 'thought' I mean roughly what the modern logician means: the content of a declarative sentence, that which might be true or false."[87] This provides the ground for the argument that architecture is not a representational art.

Scruton distinguishes two kinds of aesthetic interest, pertinent to nonrepresentational and representational art. In representational art, "attention is focused on the work, even though, in some sense, thought is not"; but also, "thought is not mere association, but on the contrary is both conveyed and developed by the work to which you attend. The true subject of thought is the subject of the work." In nonrepresentational art, "attention to the work of art is *not* bound up with an interest in its subject", and although Scruton admits that "*knowledge* of a 'subject' might be important to architectural understanding, it is hard to argue that architectural understanding can be itself a mode of *interest* in a subject."[88] Note here the italics and the quotation marks: Scruton is careful to indicate that these statements should be read against the paradigm of discursive knowledge.

The narrow understanding of knowledge is a problem, and the conclusion "that architecture is, after all, an abstract art" is even paradoxical, taken that Scruton himself points to a fundamental functionality of buildings as central to the aesthetic appreciation of architecture[89]. One can ask why representation in architecture should be limited in meaning and scope according to representation in figurative and narrative art, and whether not such an understanding distorts our actual experience of architecture[90]. It is far from indubitable that a work expresses no "thoughts about a subject", although it does so in a different way from representational art. If a figurative painting is compared to a building, which serves some public function, the subject of the painting can be compared to the institutional function of the building, and it is hard to see how figurative painting includes more thoughts, even in the narrow sense, than architecture. But even if architecture were not framed by institutional functions, the perception and experience of architecture would still be permeated by the habitational aspect. If this aspect may be seen as abstract and general, since it does not imply any specific frame, it is also concrete through being, most of all, indebted to our bodily and situational way of perceiving the world. Further, because of the fundamental historicity and public character of building, expression is a too narrow notion. It overlooks that concrete, historical events shape the environment, so that beneath a possible, apparent anonymity there is a multiplicity of intentions and events.

There are other than mimetic kinds of representation, and even if architecture is not, as semioticians say, doubly articulated, it is relevant to

look at a building with regard to how it presents and thereby also represents functions[91]. But, in addition, if the function of a building, actual or presumed, filters the way the built object appears to a perceiver, the reverse is also true. A building is not only a representation of its functions, it also articulates and manifests these. Most social functions do not exist independently of their embodiment in physical structures or spatial layout. A school, for example, demands minimally a certain use and organization of space; in most cases also a building. On the other hand, our notion of school - school as a social institution - is connected to experiences with and perceptions of school buildings. If buildings represent functions, these functions do not exist independently, nor can they be understood through verbal descriptions only. This is also because in the interplay of ideas, practices and physical structures a heterogeneous multitude of ways of using the building arises. Therefore it is advisable to speak of functions in the plural whenever one refers to the social functions of real buildings. But note, in addition, that there is a difference between practical functions and cultural institutions: what a building stands for is not identical to the purpose it serves, although these are related. Take a Gothic cathedral, for example: it serves a purpose as a place for religious worship, stands for a certain realm, and stands in a certain way as a designed object.

To speak of the language of architecture is often a misleading metaphor, but one point of similarity between spoken language and architecture is that meaning is dependent on actualization, on acts and contexts of use[92]. But even if present use constitutes an immediate and primary context, it is, in building, permeated by history. The temporal depth and historical sedimentation of older buildings is apparent even to perceivers who lack more precise historical knowledge. The building is experienced as continuing backwards in time in the same way as our field of vision continues towards the horizon. We are aware of distances and know that we cannot see clearly what is far away, or how far away it is, but we know that something is out there. The idea of a horizon is relevant to buildings also since it points out that there is a limit to our field of vision from any particular point. Similarly, the history of a building does not extend endlessly: it mostly stops at the first moment of construction[93]. In our perception of the building these two moments, the present and the original, have, in their own ways, a special standing. The present is the point from which we perceive, and is thus irreducibly part of perception[94]. The moment of construction is, on the other hand, a privileged source of meaning for the building as a designed object, for it harbours the reasons why the building was built and the intentions and conditions that gave it a particular shape. Later moments of major change to the building may have a similar, but not an identical role.

A discussion of the sources of meaning of a building inevitably leads back to points of convergence between social, constructive and aesthetic dimensions. There is the interdependence of the appearance of the building and its construction, or how it was made. This is not mechanical and more or less apparent, depending on the intentions and wishes of the commissioner and the architect, but also on the technical know-how at the time of building. But it is the building's institutional function which provides its core meaning, its *what*, which is articulated to a *how* in the interplay of technical solutions and aesthetic intentions. The institutional and the constructive do not directly touch each other in the creative process, but are mediated through aesthetic and reflective moments: do we want this or that solution, do we want it to look this way or that? It is important to see that architectural creation is articulation, and that a creative modelling of the institutional function is implied already in an intellectual analysis of the function, independently of a project of building. But it is also true that creative analysis is often prompted by the task to build.

Moments of construction are important for a building's appearance, perception, or interpretation; and since construction is ongoing and building a process, these moments are numerous. But if a building is receptive to meaning and generative of meaning, it is also forgetful of meaning. Seen historically, a building is not like a text, for parts of its history are obliterated, blurred, unreadable, or lost altogether. The greater the political significance of a building, the more likely is it that the main facts of its history will be preserved in written documents. But this is not its whole history: large parts of the life that took place there are probably forgotten.

Some of the moments in the life-span of a building remain continuously and potentially present for perception and attention, although they might not be actually perceived, and their original content may become distorted. These are the moments which have left traces on the building, either through damage or construction. These moments are often neither precisely known nor necessarily correctly located in history: thus they may be evocative of both time and history, in an intermingled way. A detail which appears as exceptional to the rest of a facade may attract our attention, we might become interested, seek and find information about why it looks as it does. The detail then embodies and manifests a moment and a time and makes the whole history of the building more present to us, although it might not be clearly perceived. In such a case, we may also be aware that our perspective is one-sided and our view obscure, yet, or for that reason, the detail touches us in its individuality.

The time when the building was erected is the most important of the moments of construction. In that point in time reasons for the building's appearance and also arguments for decisions about restoration are often sought. This is not to say that criteria should be sought in the supposed original appearance - a restoration of which is anyway illusory, since the forms of habitation change - only to suggest that there is a tendency of interpretation to turn towards origins and presupposed intentions, or towards origins understood as intentions. Although the character of the time when the building was built may not be well known, it is still not an abstract point on an abstract line of history, but concrete, through the building and the place,

which are and were tangibly *here* in a *there* and *there* in a *here*. The building suggests or reminds us of a former cultural context.

That the appearance of a building is related to our ideas about the life form which it represents or makes us aware of is true also of houses built in an old style: there is some independence in the way the building looks compared to what it actually is, in its suggested compared to its actual context. But if the distance between represented, wished-for life form and actual life form becomes too big, the house may become pathetic or ridiculous. This happens easily today, due to quick changes in culture. An example are the "old style" timbered country houses: in the modern version, base, paint and heating differ from the older, so that interior climate, with olfactory and auditory elements, is different, as is the general context of habitation. This gives rise to a sensuous, constructive and functional lack of congruity between what is suggested and what is actually there, depending, of course, on the perceiver. In addition, even if what a certain style stands for is dependent on associations related to the context where that style was born, a style does not keep its meaning eternally; new contexts affect the content of a style and may become part of it, and in the application of styles that carry various cultural associations the present cultural and functional context decides what is actualized.

The possibility to use styles as repertoire suggests that style as such cannot provide an answer to the question why a building looks as it does, why it was made that way and not another. Sometimes style is a means for design, sometimes it is a basis for it, but it is not as such a reason to design in a certain way. The decisive intentions of design are, rather, related to the function of the building. The object of planning or design is not a building in general, but a building that is meant to serve a particular function. Therefore, the original function has a privileged role for understanding the building's appearance, both in its details and as a whole. If an old but well-preserved building looks like its new function because we recognize that function in the building, it may also look like its old function, provided that we know it, or as an imagined former function. In either case, its looks are in accordance with the original function. Here one may add that due to changes in the surrounding urban fabric, the building probably appears as different from what it first did.

Although the exact facts about a building's origin are unknown, this does not prevent understanding from being directed towards a presupposed original moment, or from situating the building roughly at some point in time. This is a way of delimiting and thus making possible the cultural significance of a building. I borrow the idea of an 'authorial function' from Michel Foucault in order to point to this aspect of the representative function of architecture[95] . As I use it, the notion refers to our tendency to see a cultural artefact in terms of by whom, when, and for what purpose it exists - in other words, in terms of the intentionality behind it - and to trace back its meaning to this origin. The advantages of the notion are that it is wide enough to allow for plurality and anonymity, which are often part of the process of building, and that it points to a feature of understanding rather than to correct information. I shall briefly comment upon these points.

The authorial function suggests that there is a subject behind an artefact, but this subject may be plural or singular, a group or an individual. If the authorial function is performed by a group, this probably includes the commissioner or client as well as the architect, perhaps others, too. The authorial function may also be performed by a more or less anonymous body. For example, with the Finnish grey-stone churches from the Middle Ages, we might not know the names of the builders, and the date of construction may be uncertain within a few hundred years[96]. What we know is that they were built by local communities to the glory of God. Such an imprecisely identified group can very well perform the authorial function and provide a context for our perception of the churches.

It must be emphasized that the idea of an authorial function does not imply that we have knowledge or that our guesses are correct, only that our interpretation includes a focus on the origin of the thing. If the author is unknown, we still see the building as an artefact made by someone, as a meaningful cultural creation. To have specific knowledge of the author is not crucial for interpretation; rather, interpretation is necessary for the meaningfulness of an identification. Most admirers of the Cathedral of Chartres do not know Abbot Suger except through the cathedral. To be able to identify the responsible agent is useful if this can provide comparisons to other buildings by the same person, but often the interpretation of buildings seeks it materials in the culture of a certain time, rather than with individuals. Another case of insufficient information would be one where the perceiver constructs the author incorrectly, as could happen to an ignorant observer looking at the reproduced timber houses. On the other hand, incorrect construction of an author can be corrected; new information about the origin of the building changes the way we perceive it. The authorial function is not a guarantee of correct interpretation, but a supposition that accompanies the interpretive approach.

Even if the above points are accepted, it could be objected that we do not need a notion of authorial function, for artefactuality already implies cultural intentions: that the thing was made at a certain time by someone. There is, however, an additional reason for the attractiveness of the term authorial in the context of building, namely the connotation of authority, thus also of responsibility and power. This is all the more important since the building is, unlike many smaller artefacts, an element of the *polis* and the public realm. Authority suggests not only that the author of a building once produced it, but also that an author's responsibility for the building continues after the first moment of construction. The authorial function accompanies and maintains the building; it is thanks to the exercise of this function that the building is what it is.

But if the authorial function is maintaining as well as originary, we should perhaps distinguish between two kinds of authorial function, one related to origins, the other to maintenance. This can be done, but one should then remember that the two are often related, both historically and in perception, and that in perception they influence each other even to the point of becoming indistinguishable. For example, as part of the perception of a building, the authorial function will often be transferred to the present function of the building, for in experience, the present function represents and mediates the totality of what the building is and was. If a church is used as a storehouse, this is a denegration and a desecration of the original authorial act and function because in the building, its former function is still present as a basic, although muffled character[97]. This is why the reuse of the building is not innocent or neutral, and why it is politically efficient: the character of church is present, but repressed. On the other hand, whenever such a building is again used as a church, a resurrection of its repressed religious history will take place, a reanimation of its *genius*, but now with an added history of suffering[98].

I have emphasized the importance of a real or presumed original and originary moment of construction, on the one hand, and the present, on the other, for our understanding of a building. The roles of these moments are different, due to different factors. The first moment harbours the reasons for the building's existence and basic design. But the past is not accessible as such or as a whole, it is only insinuated, hinted at in fragments. The contexts have disappeared. Only the present is fully here and animates the building, but it need not have a meaningful relation to the building's design. The importance of present use increases when a building has a long and discontinuous history, where the authorial function is divided and shared between many subjects. If there is also no present instance that dominates the building in the present and gives it identity and character, the building may disintegrate in perception and be experienced as a collage. This may be for the good or for the bad. But if a building is used, regardless of whether its history is lost or preserved, it is always fully here; it is this building now. People may seek information about the building but they nevertheless perceive it as an entity, with a given, basic identity which is somehow present or here, on this site, albeit perhaps unknown. This is the innocence of every moment of a building's existence: sheer presence, adaption to and indulgence in life as it goes on. Perhaps the tendency of a restoration to create or recreate a whole is related to the idea that a building should be inhabited and fully appropriated by its present users. We want to live in one building, however inclusive of former history; we demand coherence and order.

In the section on atmosphere, I discussed the quality of space, understood in terms of openness and affordance. Here, I want to suggest a companion and counterpart to it, and call it symbol. Built symbols are representatives of order, they are the cornerstones of architecture as an affirmation or celebration of social values. "A symbol is a law, or regularity of the indefinite future."[99] The building symbolizes through convention but in addition it often stands for convention and law, and regulates the present and the future. The built symbol represents an established order, which it also instantiates through tacit agreement. But there may also be an element of ineffability to the symbol, particularly when it refers to and presents power as absolute or transcendent. With the most powerful buildings, we cannot do away with either dimension, and yet there is a contradiction between social convention and divine law. However, this is also because power often seeks legitimation in the divine.

In general, the built symbol is typically a building or place that is highly defined through institutional function and history. It stands out from its environment, in a directly perceptual way or through its known history and status. A building that is a symbol also implies certain rules for behaviour, which is proper or improper, typically depending also on the status of the visitor. A priest has access to parts of the church where ordinary people are not allowed; something similar is true for houses of parliament. In highly symbolic buildings, the use of space is often ritualized or at least supervised.

Lastly, in a discussion of the functional aspects of the built environment, what is most easily left unnoticed are the nonfunctional and unplanned aspects. In perception, they appear as causes rather than reasons for a building's appearance, but it should also be noted that in experience, the nonfunctional touches on the functional[100] . Further, the idea of a socially unplanned dimension of the habitat is directly relevant to and indeed part of the social function of buildings, which are used as much against as according to intentions. The socially unplanned is not adverse to planning, but points to habitation as it takes its course regardless of planners' intentions. Thus it may point to the creativity of everyday life, to the pressure of social needs or to the appropriation of built space[101] . Note, further, that the nonfunctional or unplanned can be integrated in the processes of planning as starting-points, conditions and challenges of building. Here, I shall only add some random observations to the earlier discussion.

First, the nonfunctional and the aesthetic perspectives are related. In both, we can find an emphasis on being rather than doing, on things appearing in their own ways, on time and space, atmosphere and expressiveness. When construction is used as or turns into ornament, this might be seen as its nonfunctional side. But, on the other hand, we might prefer to consider ornament as an aesthetic function, and see nonfunctionality, in the area of construction, as what resists construction and works against it: the unplanned and unintended as both conditions for and counterforces to the seriousness and weight of building. More important, perhaps, is the nonfunctional aspect of the social functions of buildings. In this area there is no absolute nonfunctionality, except perhaps in a case where one would build a house and then leave it to itself. Even Japanese gardens, meant for looking at, are used, explored and visited with the eyes and the mind, although not with the body. The significance of nonfunctionality is the presence of unauthorized and unintended, other ways of using the building, where otherness simply stands for different approaches and ways of being. A building which gives room for these kinds of use is rich in space.

The appearance of areas

I shall now approach more concretely the relationships between the different perceptual elements of the urban experience of public space, which are based either on its permanent or changing features, on institutional functions, in actual or possible use, or on all of these. The intention is to indicate generally how the kind of overall meaning which makes areas identifiable arises, and the suggestion is that certain kinds of activities characterize areas of a city. The question is approached through descriptions of types of areas: the market place, the supermarket and the mall, downtown and business centres, centres of administration and power (where I include an excursus on the Senate Square in Helsinki), residential areas, leisure areas, and traffic. These are examples. In connection to different area types, different aspects of environmental experience are accentuated, some of which are dealt with more reflectively in the next chapter. Also, in experiencing a particular area as a certain kind of area, the important aspects of the area vary according to the perspective. Generally, the more specific the functions, the more significant are the instances of incorrect or deviant use.

The idea is not to create a classification or typology, but to point out how aspects and elements of urban experience combine with each other, relate to and become constitutive of urban life. This takes place differently in different cities, and there is no way to avoid a certain cultural bias: what I propose is not equally relevant to all cultures although I have attempted to pick out activities with a large general and topical relevance. The discussions include descriptions and analyses of area types that I know well; in other cases the description should be seen more as a sketch of tendencies that manifest themselves more clearly in some contemporary cities than in others.

It should also be noted that the area types overlap, and that not all parts of a city are characterized by an identifiable, or equally identifiable dominant activity. On the other hand, on a more particular level, to which I shall not go, one can presume that activities are understood and construed on the basis of what takes place in a particular habitat. For example, understanding upperclass life as a variety of dwelling is relative to a person's direct or mediated experience with some particular wealthy areas.

The market place

Let me first note that these observations of market places are based on the Finnish context, where open-air food markets are found in most cities. Markets with similar functions can, however, be found in many other countries:

exchange of goods is a basic societal activity that in many cultures took place on certain days and on certain places. The same is true of the other everyday business institution I shall next discuss, the supermarket. The significance and charm of the market place, in its more archaic but still surviving forms, is in the concreteness and individuality of human relations and the items for sale. But also this is changing.

To begin with rhythms, a market place is used for markets only at certain hours and days, and so changes both in function and appearance according to daily, weekly and annual rhythms. The daily rhythm of a food market open on weekdays includes the setting up of the market stands in the early morning, commerce into the early afternoon, then cleaning up, followed by the empty hours of late afternoon and night. In Finnish market places, there is typically a weekly rhythm in addition to the alternation of business days and holidays: Mondays are mostly quiet, whereas Saturdays, as the best business days, attract both residents and tourists. In addition to daily and weekly rhythms, there is the seasonal rhythm. In a cold climate summer is, for obvious reasons, livelier than winter, but the winter is not just a negation of summer; it has its own qualities. Not only different kinds of groceries and fish, but also of customers dominate in different seasons. If the summer is more buoyant, winter appears in a minimalist way, brings out fewer smells in sharper contrast, bites our noses with cold air and in general plays temperature and humidity against our bodies, which stand out as if in relief against the less hospitable environment.

Reflecting on actual situations, one can observe the interaction of season and weather: weather is a seasonal factor in the sense that a certain kind of weather may be felt to belong to or be typical of a particular season. A typical weather, as for example a clear but cold October day, with a bright blue sky and the glowing and charred colours of late autumn mushrooms and berries for sale, may produce an experience of recognition of the season: this is autumn. Such an experience confirms a permanence of the world and of the individual as standing in the changes and recurrence of seasons. On the other hand, if January and February are grey and slushy, there is a corresponding regret for white snow and proper cold and in addition, with present pollution, a disturbing and reinforced feeling that things are not as they should be. A similar weather is, however, appropriate in November.

Natural and unplanned elements thus influence the market place very directly, and not only its immediately perceptible features, such as light and colours, felt temperature, sound- and smellscape, or the presence and behaviour of people. Nature has also shaped or influenced some macrolevel aspects of the rhythms of the marketplace. In the Helsinki market place in the Southern Harbour (*Kauppatori* or *Salutorget*), there is a Herring market in the first week in October when fishermen and peasants come from the archipelago to sell marinated herrings, black bread and other products. The tradition, dating from 1743, is changing, but its continuity and persistence is noteworthy and has its roots in the annual rhythms of peasant society, where October was a time of change, the harvest was in and people who worked on the farms had their chance to look for another place to work. Still in more recent times, the city dwellers had to buy supplies for the winter, which was one reason for the country people to come in. Through this week, as through the sale of Christmas trees in November and December, there is a sense in which the market place takes part in and even constitutes the annual rhythms of life. These annual events still retain a function of connecting city and countryside.[102]

Daily, weekly, seasonal and annual rhythms make the market place, as a place, very much dependent on repeated experiences. For a visitor who comes in the late afternoon, the market place may be imperceptible and nonexistant. A person familiar with Finnish culture may guess where the market place is, even if he comes outside business hours, but only those who know the city know that the market place is on this site, and for them it is there all the time, characterizing and naming the site, creating a place. This dependence on experience is one dimension of the context-dependence of such an urban institution. But the market place is not only a place for selling things or meeting people. It is typically located somewhere at the centre of the community, both geographically and historically. A market place is often connected to historically important events, or it may be situated in the immediate vicinity of such socially and politically important institutions as the town hall, school, post office or church. These represent the common and the shared; they were and are - to some extent - places where the meeting of people is essential for the meaning of the place.

In a bigger city with several market places, these may acquire a local significance which corresponds to their role in a smaller village. The significance of a market place is, generally, bigger on the social than on the strictly political dimension of society, but these are, of course, not separate. In Helsinki, the Hakaniemi market place (or *Hagnäs torg*) is surrounded by a traditional workingclass area and is adjacent to the trade union headquarters and the headquarters of the Social Democratic Party. All leftist demonstrations used to start from this market place. The area around the Kauppatori is very different; it is the historical and administrative centre of Helsinki, and the Employers' Confederation is also located there. But the place also opens directly to the sea, to the delicate archipelago, a connection which the Herring week celebrates.

The atmosphere, the wares and the clientele of these markets differ, and although the political differences between the institutions around these two markets have decreased, they still contextualize the places. But where Hakaniemi has retained its character and is still a place where ordinary people buy food from other ordinary people and those who have time but no jobs can linger and chat, Kauppatori has suffered from heavy touristification and has become increasingly characterless - as the adaptation to tourists is often destructive of culture, which becomes stultified in copying its own typical and charming features. There is a different atmosphere and taste of these markets - on our tongues and as reflective judgement. To like one or the other manifests a willingness to appreciate and enter a certain form of life.

Any market place has its own individual connotations, and also its characteristic rhythms, related to the climate and the community in which it exists. A market place is a highly site-specific commercial institution. Depending on these characteristics, there may also be certain moments which are experienced as more typical and representative of the place than others. Saturday morning would in many cases be the chosen, paradigmatic version of the market place, rather than Monday morning, not to talk of afternoons or evenings. This paradigmatic version, or versions, is present as a mental image which hovers above or around the place context, an environmental image which hovers above or around the place even when it is empty, as part of its substance, of the density of a reality which keeps appearing in different ways. Although they are actually absent, market stands, customers, vegetables and fish are virtually there, confirmed by our trust in the rhythmic recurrences of natural and social life. This trust is born from our familiarity with certain practices and life forms, a familiarity which constitutes us as social beings.

The supermarket and the mall

Urban districts of more recent origin typically lack a market place, but they do have a centre for the purchase of food and household articles: the supermarket. Compared to the market place, the supermarket is a self-enclosed environment, often unrelated to nature and to the cultural and natural history of the place. Artificial light is constant and a daily rhythm is present only in the form of customer peaks at certain times of the day. The same is true for the weekly rhythm. The articles for sale do not vary much according to the season. To the extent that annual events, such as Easter or Christmas, are perceptible in the supermarket, they are exposed rather than constituted. The supermarket is non-contextual in the sense that it lacks a relation to the particular area in which it is situated: supermarkets belonging to the same chain are similar all over the country, and are often situated at the edge of an area, in a no-man's land, rather than in the village. This is because the supermarket is ideally designed for customers who drive there and need big parking lots[103]. The fact that people get there by car further alienates the supermarket as a lived place from its surroundings: getting there does not involve the sensuously and socially rich interaction of walking on a street, or even of public transportation.

As an environment for purchasing goods, the super-market is characterized by efficiency. The scarcity of employees and the mass and anonymity of customers to each other offer few possibilities for chatting, and even fewer for the kind of polite bonding of people who know each other well enough that there is some meaning to the question "How are you?" Compared to the market place, where sellers can be identified with their goods, and vice versa, in the supermarket goods are simply for sale, and there are more goods than people. Recent developments, for example that the customers scan the prices themselves and only pay at the cashier, strengthen this trend. Buying at the supermarket is one-dimensional compared to the market place, where social interaction, negotiation and choice, including aesthetic aspects of the individual items one buys and the seller one buys from - this cucumber looks good, there is a reliable face - are more central.

Large indoor shopping and restaurant areas, malls, may be seen as extensions of the supermarket or warehouse, but they also look back at and take up some features of out- or indoor markets: the variety and individuality of sellers as well as the possibilities of strolling, looking around, meeting friends or talking to strangers. As Witold Rybczynski describes it: "I saw people rubbing shoulders and meeting their fellow citizens in a noncombative environment - not behind the wheel of a car, but on foot. (...) When I wanted to be part of a crowd, I went to the mall."[104]

Downtown and business centres

The downtown, an urban centre dedicated to commerce, is a typically American phenomenon, but with a worldwide influence which can be seen, for example, in the world trade centres that have sprung up as mushrooms after rain in bigger cities over the world[105]. In my description of this area type, I shall sketch the environmental experience and affordances, but postpone most of the comments and the analysis of its significance as a symptom and element of contemporary trends of management and building to chapter six. Let me first point out that I use the term downtown in a loose way to refer to urban commercial areas with a central location. The word downtown is used to characterize a type of urban area rather than to designate a historically and geographically defined form of urban development. The downtown need not have precise geographical boundaries and the word downtown, used adverbially, characterizes certain areas in dominant, but not sovereign respects.

As with markets, the rhythms of downtown life are important for its character. The presence of people gives the area its pulse; the uneasiness awakened by a deserted downtown is not only caused by imagined or real threats, it is also related to the eerie feeling that the area is now not really itself, but other. On the other hand, there are hours when the downtown is experienced as at most or optimally itself: morning, lunch or afternoon, when streets are filled with people, many of these businessmen leaving and entering offices, carrying briefcases or a take-away lunch. Compared to the market, the rhythms of downtown life are less dependent, but not independent of seasons. Seasons do not influence the basic activities profoundly: the substance of the business does not change depending on natural rhythms. But the way in which things are done, including appearance and social interaction, changes. For example, at lunch hours in summer the small parks around

appropriation. May Day 1912, workers' procession on the Senate Square. HCM, photo Signe Brander

Wall Street in New York are filled with elegant people who sit down under the trees with their paper bags to have lunch, thus creating, in the eyes of a European, a civilized and homely atmosphere[106]. Such a blooming of street life is not possible in the winter.

Our ideas of downtown are connected to images of the area at hours which we think of as typical. The area stands for such features as efficiency, rush, scarcity of time, access of money and a high frequency of communication, focused on information or on impressing other people rather than on open and receptive emotional interaction. If these are important aspects of our understanding of the area, in thinking about it we visualize downtown as it appears at certain moments, which need not be representative in a statistical sense. These images correspond to expectations and ideas which we inherit and cultivate, partly from and through personal experience, partly through other people's experience, but partly also through media, popular fiction and art. This cultivation of images may include oneself, so that a business professional, for example, wants to look like a business professional on film[107].

Centres of administration and power

In comparison to micro- or macroeconomic business areas, centres of administration and power typically have a more stable presence in a city. In their manifestations and for their character, they are also more dependent on architectural design, site, and city planning. This is evident even from a brief look at some historical and contemporary aspects of the growth, articulation and experience of cities.

First, even before city planning was an established practice, villages and cities grew around a castle or a church: around those institutions which hold and symbolize spiritual or political power. These institutions acted, to use Rossi's term, as primary elements through and around which urban development takes place. As a second, but related aspect, one might note the importance of the site and the interdependence of site and buildings as manifestations of power or worth. Thus when an area was christianized, the church would typically be built on a place that was already considered to be holy, which would increase the sacrality of both site and building, at the same time that it would subjugate or repress the old gods. The exchange of gods would only emphasize the abstract or strategic value of the particular site in itself. A striking example is the Church of Our Saviour in Moscow, built beetween 1812 and 1857, demolished by Stalin in 1931 to be replaced by a Palace of the Soviets - which was never built - and which is now again rebuilt[108]. Third, in modern city planning communal institutions are nodes for the development of the plan: important buildings have a priority in relation to other buildings, which are placed relative to the former. An important building is likely to be placed in an intersection or on a height, so that it can be seen - although not necessarily approached - from many angles.

The building in such cases dominates or supervises its environment. Fourth, buildings of social importance often coincide with buildings of architectural merit. More effort and thought has been spent on them, planners and materials have been chosen more carefully. Also for these reasons, such buildings stand out from their environment and catch the attention even of a stranger who does not know the institution housed by the building, but realizes that the building is important.

Thanks to site, city planning and design, socially and politically central institutions often stand out from the urban fabric and function as symbols of the powers they mediate and represent. However, political or administrative centres are usually not monofunctional areas, but are interwoven with housing, restaurants, perhaps some shops. For reasons of planning and building suggested above, the administrative or political functions tend to dominate the area in which they are situated, but additional reasons are related to the social functions of the area, to how it is actually used. It is not architecture alone that imposes the felt presence of power, but the internalization and acceptance of power by the citizenry, in combination with the feeling that space is supervised. The administrative or political area is dominated by rules of proper behaviour, which are usually internalized by citizens. Guards or supervisors do not tell people how to behave, they rather stand as reminders of the need to behave properly. The idea of proper behaviour also spreads to the adjacent functions: in such areas apartment buildings and restaurants alike tend to have a solemn, respectful air about them.

Areas of power may call forth either a ritualization or an aestheticization of behaviour. The former is typical of churches during services: movements are strictly defined, both in form and purpose. By aestheticization I here refer to a broader and weaker notion: situations where visitors or citizens become aware of themselves in relation to the (institutions in the) built environment, thus adapting their trajectories and pace of movement to what is considered proper. Even a political demonstration is disciplined not only by the police but also by the participants. But aestheticization may also take the opposite turn, as when one seeks the improper and feels, or tries to convey, emancipation through breaking the implicit rules of human presence in a certain space. What appears as irrational behaviour in public space may not be spontaneous, but intentional and political, as for example when civil activists expose body parts in front of a government building. Regulated and ritualized space also invites rule-breaking behaviour without political motives at least in individuals with any inclinations in that direction. I met two teenagers behind a column of the Finnish Parliament house on a New Year's Eve. We wondered what they were doing there, but had a nice chat, for a moment nesting together on this site of power, probably around some beverage. A hierarchic building may invite an aimless and irreverent lingering in the wrong place.

The internalization of power may be reinforced by recurrent events which stabilize, create, mould and sometimes constitute the identity of the

area. I shall exemplify this, and other aspects of the space of power, in the following excursus on the Senate Square in Helsinki.

Excursus: the Senate Square

If institutions of power are concentrated in a small area and spatially related to each other, that area in itself will probably become a built symbol, as is the case with the Senate Square in Helsinki, originally built in the first decades of the nineteenth century, when Finland became an autonomous part of Russia. There is also an interesting ambivalence to the Senate Square as a symbol of power: the power which is represented is in part historical, rather than presently effective. The church and the university have lost power and the High Court, which also used to be situated at the square, has moved away. Compared to the rest of the city, not to speak of the country, this area points backwards in time. But precisely as a historical example of urban symbolism of power the Senate Square illustrates changes in the institutions that are considered to hold power and value.

The Senate Square is a space of political and national importance. It has been used for important political demonstrations and manifestations of power, and was from the start a built symbol. Already in the nineteenth century, military parades where held on the square, but in that time power was not located in Finland, but in St Petersburg, so the relation of built space and power was different from what it became when Finland gained independence in 1917. Because of its symbolic weight, the square has later attracted an array of events which represent more local, specified interests. To illustrate the idea that the meaning of the built environment is constituted in an interaction of built structures, institutionally defined character and patterns of use, I shall point to some of the events that take place on and thereby also constitute this square as a cultural place. I am going to point out three aspects, first, the ways in which some events enjoy official status and affirm stately power and national identity; second, the local aspect of those events in which groups or minorities manifest themselves; and, third, the anarchistic aspect of carnivalesque use of space. In all these aspects, the relation to power is central.

Events that affirm existing power take place annually on dates of national importance. Most important among these is Independence Day, December 6th, when students march in procession from the graves of the fallen in the wars 1939-1944 - the Heroes graves' - to the Senate Square, in a deep winter darkness lightened by torches and the white student caps. On this day, people keep burning candles in their windows, and around the square the windows of the public buildings are similarly lit with candles. The procession can be interpreted as an act of gratitude to those who gave their lives for independence, but it also binds the younger generations firmly to the ideals of their fathers and mothers. To put this more strongly, the ritual is a form of obedience, and the sacrifice which is present at its geographical and mental starting point silences the voices of doubt or dissent. Manifestations of this sort are intimately connected to ideas of national and political unity: an ideological construct which must, in order to work, be presented as given and foundational.

In the procession on Independence Day there is an echo of an earlier march. This march, in which the square was established as a site of national power is the white march into Helsinki on May 21, 1918, led by General Mannerheim, later Field Marshal of Finland. The date is today celebrated as the Day of the Fallen. The other significant echo can be found in the marches on May Day when socialists march from the Hakaniemi square on the northern, workers' side of the Long Bridge into the Senate Square. In a similar way as the students' procession, this march manifested not only the presence of a certain group of people, but also of certain values in the Senate Square.

To occupy the space of power is not only to expose oneself in that space, to stand for what one is and wants, but also to appropriate or claim the space. On the monumental stairs of the Cathedral speakers are well exposed although, because of the sloping ground of the square, contact between speaker and audience is hard to achieve.[109] Standing on the stairs one looks over the city, to the sea, rather than to the city and its inhabitants. The square is better suited for parades, where the audience is on the stairs and the performers on the square, which was the case when the square was built; now that would be impossible, for the middle space is occupied by the statue of Alexander II of Russia.

Today demonstrations instead tend to focus on the Parliament House, a building which is equally situated on a height and looks over the city. Its columned facade has a self-enclosed air about it: it suggests that there is an entrance, but one knows not where, so that those who climb up to address power are always in a weaker position, compared to those who hold power. Members of Parliament have to be pulled out from the building, and to stand on the stairs is still to be on the outside of power. One has to beg to be heard, look up, wait for them to come out. To speak from the stairs is perhaps in a sense to address the whole country, but since there is no space in front of the building where a crowd could gather, an actual audience will never be present. It is impossible to create a significant political situation, or even the semblance of one taking place here and at this moment. This is relevant if in our time, when political life is importantly dependent on media, the representation of events is even more important than before. The stairs of the Parliament House are thus similar, but also opposite to the stairs of the Cathedral at the Senate Square, and it is no wonder that the former functions as a podium for political speeches relatively seldom. We may further note that the Cathedral, as a house of God, is neutral in relation to politics, so that it cannot be permanently occupied by any party.

To continue with recent annual events on the Senate Square, on October 24th, on UN day, a candle demonstration organized by peace organizations has for some years been held at the stairs of the Cathedral. It started as a reminder of the war in Bosnia, and has continued as a reminder of the civil wars that go on around the world. This demonstration relates to that of Independence Day, standing for similar, yet opposite values; pointing away from national self-satisfaction and pride over past sacrifices and towards the actual, contemporary suffering of others. This is more disturbing and demanding, since it speaks to our conscience, addresses our responsibility. Perhaps it is no great surprise that the number of participants and the attention it gets is much smaller than those of Independence Day.

I now come to the local aspects of the use of the Senate Square, where particular groups manifest their own presence. The significance of these manifestations is less political than cultural or social, although in a different climate their political significance could increase. One annual ritualistic event is the Lucia Parade, December 13th, a commemoration of Santa Lucia, a symbol of light. A religious or moral dimension is, however concealed by the secular or pagan, innocent darkness of that time of the year, which is central to the celebration. Another pagan element is evident in the children dressed as Christmas brownies. They are an important part of the procession, but they also follow the light of the saint, or should one say, of the young woman. The local aspect is that these festivities are more common in Sweden and that in Finland the tradition is anchored among Swedish-speaking Finns. On that morning, a Lucia appears in every Swedish school and in many homes. On the stairs of the Cathedral she manifests, although tacitly and discreetly - the way we are - our presence. The procession here starts from the square and proceeds through the main streets to the Finlandia Hall, where there is a celebration. Light and warmth spread over the city from the church in harmonious merriment, while political and institutional functions are downplayed.

In recent years, Regional days have also been held on the square, the idea being that each region of Finland, in its turn, presents itself. These events have been criticized for being too rural in character, for bringing a market place atmosphere to the square, which is considered improper. But it must be observed that that location is significant for the idea of bringing other parts of the country to the capital. The juxtaposition would not be so manifest on any other place.

A third local use of the square can be seen in the academic celebrations, most notably and regularly the opening of the university on September 10th, but also other festivities arranged by the university. On these occasions, the space is claimed by knowledge and learning, and an axis between learning and spirituality is established through the red carpet rolled out on the street from the university main entrance towards the entrance of the Cathedral. As with the Lucia, but more clearly here, there is soundscape to the ritual: the bells of the Cathedral toll and normal traffic is interrupted. The citizens who happen to pass by stare in astonishment, but they are few: this is an event that manifests academic self-sufficiency. It may be noted that while the University of Helsinki is a state-owned, public institution it has an autonomy which is also part of its self-understanding.

The ethnic or academic uses of space represent civil society rather than the state. The same is true for the New Year celebrations on the Senate Square: here the city mayor gives a speech and citizens drink champagne, gathering in community rather than in the *polis*. A similar communal, but also more local aspect was present in the construction of a snow church replica on the site of the eighteenth church which preceded the building of the present square. In addition to adding historical depth and local identity, this was a project of an organization of building contractors, who thus made themselves and their work known.

Although the Senate Square has many semantic dimensions, one version is dominant and decisive at any one time. The present use of the space confers an encompassing character upon it. This is why carnivalesque use has a radical effect, why it converts, inverts or transposes the elements of the everyday. It presents something which is not normally there, but it does not present this as an additional element but as a total atmosphere. The carnival does not enter the space but conquers and transforms it. Even if this transformation is only temporary, it will stay on as a memory of the possibility of a different state, of the impossible and the improper.

A fairly tame and generally accepted carnivalesque use of the Senate Square is the annual Academic Quarter, a students' sports competition which engages universities from all over Finland. It includes a relay race in Helsinki and smaller races on the square, where the sloping site contributes to the jocular tone of the whole event - although some teams compete in earnest. The Academic Quarter is not offensive, for students are supposed to behave in such ways, youthfully, playfully. It is part of their vitality. Other events have been more disturbing, most notably the rock concert of the rock band The Leningrad Cowboys and the Red Army Choir in the mid-1990s. To use the square for rock concerts was considered improper, further proved by the fact that members of the audience urinated on the square. Apart from these effects, there is a fascinating poignancy and complexity of the symbolic dimensions of this particular one-time event, with "the band that has lost its city" and "the choir that has lost its army" on a square built by Imperial Russia for the rule of autonomous Finland. On the other hand, the criticism against introducing rock concerts, regional markets or celebrations of ice-hockey victories on a mass scale on the square has a point. The more such happenings that are held there, the more the square loses its political weight and seriousness. Thereby the possibilities to convert space and invert values diminishes. If everything can be done anywhere, this does not increase but decreases the possibilities of meaningful public action.

Sometimes the creative use of space takes place more privately. On a winter night, two students of law, coming from a party and in tails, walked past the Cathedral. The stairs were covered with snow, and were perceived as affording an excellent opportunity for downhill skiing, which the two gentlemen promptly utilized. They called a taxi, went to fetch their skis and carried out their impulse, still in tails, using the taxi as a ski lift. On the following day, only the meandering traces of the sportive activity indicated that something had taken place there during the night.

Residential areas

In a political perspective the idea that centres of power, whether political or spiritual, should be identifiable, makes sense. In a democracy, it is important for the citizen to know where to go or where to address oneself, and in any state, power is about relations and thus about orienting oneself in reality. Besides these public functions there are other social functions, which do not seem to demand equally defined and identifiable places. The household, everyday personal life, habitation in its most basic sense do not demand publicly defined and generally known locations but, rather, the contrary.

Residential areas vary in layout and design, and different areas are populated by people with different ideas of how to live, different tacit architectures[110]. These areas are not necessarily functionally or socially homogeneous; the residential function is, rather, mixed with other functions. Also the map does not tell where we have a residential area; habitation is rather the basic warp of the urban fabric. But many dominantly residential areas stand out in the city: we often recognize high-rise apartment buildings, row houses and villas, to mention a few examples. Where these dominate, we know that we are in an area where people live. This knowledge suggests certain things and colours our way of perceiving the buildings.

In a mixed area, one may not know which function dominates; yet habitation is perceptible in signs and traces, so that one may talk of a general habitational quality of environments. It appears in the behaviour of people and through the presence of certain kinds of objects. An area with numerous and different affordances for occupying space in ways that allow for social interaction appears as an inhabited area even when no human beings are seen. These affordances vary from children's playgrounds to benches, shops, cafés and doorways: spaces where it would be easy to stop and look, or to stop and chat. The habitational quality of a good residential area permeates it through different clues. While individual elements may be replaced, on the whole the quality and the affordances are permanently there. The bench is there all the time, sometimes sat on, sometimes waiting. The playground is not abandoned when it is empty, it is only experiencing a pause in the ongoing rhythm that dominates the place. In the residential area, no hours are more representative than others. Even at night the area is used and occupied; behind drawn curtains and dark windows people sleep, dream, make love, feed their babies, work or look at videos.

To apply a functional perspective on leisure and recreation may be seen as missing the mark in a way which may be similar to that of looking at habitation as a function. To reside, to dwell, to live is indeed much less functionally defined than to do business or exercise power, not least since much of our dwelling activities are not goal-directed. We eat because we are hungry, but also for pleasure, and this is true of many other activities as well. In addition, there is an openness to much of our living: I enter the café or the shop not only to get something, but also to expose myself to perceptual and social stimuli, to allow things to happen and this life to unfold as I touch and am touched by the world.

This letting things happen, which may be part of our everyday life, is an important part of the value of recreation. Some areas of a city, typically a park from the late nineteenth century - such as Central Park in New York or Bois de Bologne in Paris - provide alternatives to the stress and goal-directedness of urban life. A similar element is found in botanical gardens: although the plants have name tags, what is sought in a botanical garden is typically not extended knowledge, but the company of the plants, the moist air and pleasant smells, the sound of the wind and of birds, of leaves that fall, vistas and views of a soft landscape under big trees[111] . If the large parks were planned to offer the pleasures of nature to the population of the industrialized city, they still carry this potential, notwithstanding the fact that the nature of parks is cultivated nature. Integration of nature and culture is also true of the rhythms of the park. The city dweller knows his parks, and the expectations of the appearance of spring flowers, autumn colours or the blue and yellow patterns of low shadows and bright midwinter sun may be among the fundamental aesthetic pleasures of a particular city. Plants are planted but blossom by themselves, seasons go through the parks and give them life: the presence of nature is an aspect of the freedom felt in the park. The park also manifests the values of gardening and cultivating: order and beauty bestowed upon nature, a harmony which looks graceful but is the result of labour.

The idea of a proper use of parks varies among cultures and among persons. But although many parks are not supervised, there seems to exist an internalized norm of proper behaviour among those who occupy them together: a general agreement of what can be done and where, a sense of moderation and respect for others, combined with the idea that one should be able to freely enjoy the space. In ideal cases a truly civilized behaviour characterizes the park which is both public and free and therefore demands responsibility: an attempt is made to respect others without suppressing oneself, without feeling that power is imposed from above. The existence of such unwritten agreements seems dependent on the amount - and the character - of regular visitors. If newspapers are read by elderly gentlemen and families come on picnic, they set a rule of conduct that is not so likely to be broken.

This does not mean that the invasion of the park by other groups would be impossible.

Two things should be noticed. First, that the space of the park is open in a functional and social sense does not mean that it is uninhabited, that there is no human presence in it. The park space is, rather, open in relation to the surrounding urban fabric, where symbolic and actual ownership and a stricter definition of functions prevail. Second, the openness of the park may be an important, even defining characteristic of it, which must be defended, if threatened. This is what happened with the Kaisaniemi Park in Helsinki, which by some groups was seen as a no-man's land without clearly recognizable functions. These groups therefore made plans for a permanent stadium for the national ball game (*pesäpallo*) in the park. This aroused protests among people who either walked through the park, used it for sitting in or just enjoyed the vicinity of the park from their windows. Finally, a compromise was made: when needed, a temporary stadium is used.

Parks are not the only recreational areas of a modern city and they are perhaps not the most apparent leisure areas. Often leisure is more planned than simply taking a stroll. Planned leisure, planned adventure and a planned escape from the everyday indeed characterize amusement and theme parks, tivolis and Disneylands. In earlier times, when travelling tivolis or circuses were more common, there was a sense of transformation of the life of the village or town by exciting visitors of foreign origin, which took the townspeople temporarily into a different world. But the modern amusement park is built permanently on a certain site and the possibilities to visit it are also permanent, although the visit must, because of distances, be planned in advance. The same availability that characterizes the vegetables at the supermarket characterize the weirdness and otherness of the amusement park.

Common to ordinary parks and amusement or theme parks is that they offer alternatives to everyday life, a way out, or at least a glimpse of something different. But the more one reflects upon this feature in common, the more one sees differences. The park is integrated in the everyday: it does not primarily offer possibilities to do different things but offers instead a space just to be, without particular assignments or duties. The park space opens up. One further point is the accessibility of the park: it is open for anybody, without entrance fees. In comparison, the amusement park is a place where we go in order to have fun, so that having fun becomes almost a duty. The activities, the play, the adventures of imagination are laid out for us in advance by others. To the extent that a visit to the theme park still represents freedom, one might venture to say that it is a negative freedom, a freedom from the everyday rather than a freedom to find one's way. The paradox of theme parks, as symbols of freedom, is buried in the combinations of restricted access and ritualized use. A similar tendency is present in sports grounds. They admit of some playfulness, but the more sport is professionalized from an early age - which is the trend, at least in Finland - the less open and free is the use of these areas and the less social interaction do they provide. Bingo halls, another area of leisure, are much more relaxed in atmosphere, although here the direct interaction is of player and play rather than face to face, body to body.

Occasions for leisurely social play are also provided by cafés, bars and restaurants, with or without dancing. Also, if we look at places which are primarily frequented at night, we may observe a similar rhythm to that of the business district. Nightlife may even be seen as a more decisively rhythmic phenomenon than business or administration, since it is not perceptible in daytime, in the paradigmatic context of waking life. Even for creatures of the night, the night, not the day, is the other, the reverse side, which is a reason for its specific charm and for the sense of freedom in being awake at night, when others sleep. The night is generally, in urban areas as in nature, a time of less movement, life and sensations, but now the nightlife area blooms and creates an environment which is unique and different, although in the geographical and material sense it is the same area, the same place as in daytime. The excitement of night life would be impossible without the natural phenomenon of night, which night life denies and exploits. To function during daytime these areas - Las Vegas or the passenger ferries between Helsinki and Stockholm - must be spatially or even geographically separated from the areas of everyday life of their clients. When the temporal difference between everyday life and its reverse decreases, spatial distance must increase in order to preserve the otherness of entertainment, of letting go, which is one of its essential features.

Traffic

The above discussion of urban area types has so far left one important function aside, namely traffic. Traffic importantly influences our perception of the environment and is decisive for landuse; in today's cities, large areas are reserved for traffic, and even larger areas according to the needs of traffic. Similarly, the public spaces of many cities are viewed most of the time by many inhabitants from vehicles, private cars, buses, trams or trains, sometimes underground trains, rather than in an open-air experience. The consequences of the growth of traffic for our experience of the environment - natural, built, social - would need a study of its own, preferably with contributions from several areas of knowledge[112]. Modes of experiencing and perceiving are not as such in the focus of the present study, which rather tries to integrate these in an understanding of the habitat, where transformations and identification or permanence are the two sides of a coin. However, in such a perspective attention must be given to traffic, for its presence in today's urban and rural habitats is permanent and its impact, also on the material side of building, is remarkable.

Traffic has a special status in a study of the experience of the built environment, since it is often the point from which we experience - a point in movement. If the pedestrian experience is, as I have taken it to be, the basic

mode of experiencing the environment, one should also reflect upon the different perspectives and perceptual situations provided by different modes of transportation, and I shall make some reflections of this kind. It must be emphasized that the changes in the experience and conditions of experience I point to are general tendencies, which do not hold for each and every environment. In driving from place A to place B, I could pull over and walk into the landscape that opens up right where I stopped; a point is that as car-borne animals, we tend not to make contact with the land. Therefore transportation generally makes for less engagement, on different levels, in the actual landscape than open-air experiences, as I shall try to show in some examples.

All modes of transportation influence our relation to environment. To be transported from one place to another means that what is between the place one starts from and the place where one arrives becomes little more than a path or channel, a line which is poor in its relations to the depth of the surrounding land- or cityscape. The artery is more important than the land: a fact that is reflected in the practices of road planning where, at least in Finland, aesthetic consideration is usually given to the experience of the driver and to the view from the road, but not to the multisensuous, full impact of the road on the landscape, including people who live nearby[113].

Several features of transportation can be mentioned as reasons for the alienation of human beings from their environment. First, transportation diminishes the sensuous impact of the environment. The stimuli of all areas of sense perception are mediated and muffled; some of them, such as smell and touch, practically totally subdued. As Bernhard Waldenfels notes, transportation tends to transform the environment one passes through into a film - a silent film, one might add[114]. Due to the speed of moving in motor-driven vehicles, there are less occasions for perception and less intensity to our perceptions of places and objects. That is, even when perception is intense, it is attentive on driving rather than on the environment as it stretches out around the vehicle. If speed as experienced on the motorbike heightens my perception of an environment, this is an ego-centred environment of immediate sensation, brushing my body, existing only in relation to me and my speed[115]. To go into a forest or dive into the sea is very different: we then perceive more and more of a world that is there already, is what it is, allows us or not. Our senses are slow in relation to the richness of that world: in the autumn forest, it takes time before the mushrooms appear for our eyes, before the yellow or brown patches of colour become edible, but when they do, they jump at our eyes.

In driving, there is a vivid kinaesthetic awareness, perhaps subsidiary, but nevertheless there. However, interaction is with the car and the road, not with the environment in a fuller sense. In the car, occasions for social interaction are also scarce. One has chosen one's company and is on private grounds, although, paradoxically, at the same time often in the most public and exposed of places, the street or highway[116]. The communication between drivers does not, when it takes place, reach even a surface level of personal acquaintance. There are thus fewer occasions for such encounters with others that would be remembered as meaningful events and situations. In public transportation, incidents and discussions may occur, and there is a sense in which a bus or an underground line may become a place[117]. But again these meanings do not relate to the environment as locality. It does not seem farfetched to assume that with fewer meaningful encounters the sense of places and the feeling for environment fades.

Looked upon as a whole, there is also the effect of traffic on both air quality and material structures, on the health of humans and other living things, and the erosion of buildings and statues. But even apart from these chemical consequences, traffic in its contemporary forms has a tendency to exclude certain areas as areas of no access, as if outside society[118]. Perceived from the roadside, the highway is a no-man's land. In comparison, pedestrian areas are social spaces and often vital parts of the surrounding areas.

Some further points

Variations in accessibility, noted at some points above, influence the use and character of public space. In our perception of public space, felt access is also dependent on affordances of various kinds, including the suggested possibilities to continue and extend one's knowledge of the environment. On the political level, access defines the citizen through indicating his place, his proper area in the community and city, relative, of course, to the larger context of social structures. Accessibility is influenced by different factors, related to the individual's social status, profession, economy, age, even sex. It is important to note the role of accessibility in the construction of the environment as a cultural, political and social structure, but also to remember that inaccessibility is not always bad, nor is accessibility always good.

In perception the changing, temporary and permanent elements of the environment fuse, and our ability to distinguish them is dependent on both experiences and (mediated) information. However, that we know something to be a temporary element does not mean that it does not influence our experience of the environment. We cannot simply subtract, for an inner eye, certain elements and by ourselves construct other versions of the environment; we cannot by imagination alone match the actual experience of an empty square if we have only had the chance to see it filled with cars; in other words, we cannot know the character and atmosphere of the empty square through inference[119]. This has to do with the perceptual and semantic multidimensionality of environment, but more importantly with the fact that in experiencing the environment we are in it. We do not just perceive the environment in front of us, but are ourselves measures of the environment: it is we who give the environment its proper scale, and this capacity for scaling or measuring is inseparable from the actual bodily existence of being in this place.

Notes

[1] Christian de Portzamparc, quoted in Contal 1992a, 60.

[2] On meaning and sense, compare the introductory words to Part two.

[3] A distinction between meaning and significance, such as described by E.D. Hirsch, thus collapses; Hirsch 1967. I also remind the reader of the discussion of response as one element of aesthetic experience; chapter two, third section.

[4] Boyer 1994, 26-29.

[5] Compare chapter one, third section.

[6] Ricoeur 1976, 60.

[7] The dependence of space on its constituent elements is stressed by both Gibson 1966, 59, 112, and Arnheim 1977, 9-31.

[8] This is also dealt with in Part three.

[9] This has been suggested by Tore Tallqvist in conversations and lectures; see Tallqvist 1995.

[10] I discuss appropriation in chapter five, second section.

[11] This kind of sensitivity and skill may also be referred to as 'taste'; see Sibley 1987/1959.

[12] Compare also chapter one, third section.

[13] Compare Dufrenne 1967, 53-61.

[14] Böhme 1995, 21-48.

[15] Böhme 1995, 95-96. He uses the term *Befindlichkeit* for presence.

[16] Compare Norberg-Schulz' 'existential space' which is, however, more closely related to place and more specified than my notion of 'space'; Norberg-Schulz 1975, 432-433 and Norberg-Schulz 1981, 25-26. Sue L. Cataldi's 'sensitive space' is definitely relevant although she uses 'space' more metaphorically, with an emphasis on tactility and on the body; Cataldi 1993, i.e. 118. See also Horelli-Kukkonen 1993, 148-157, on 'breathing spaces'.

[17] Caygill 1997, 22.

[18] In an interview with the author, Glenn Murcutt emphasized the importance of the '-ings' of architecture; published in *Hufvudstadsbladet*, 31st August 1994.

[19] Heidegger 1954; compare chapter three, fifth section and chapter five, second section.

[20] Merleau-Ponty 1992/1945, 516.

[21] *Erlebnisgesellschaft*. On the need for privacy, see Cataldi 1993, 20; on the need for 'blind spots', Welsch 1996, 58-61, 133-134 (in English 1997, 25-27, 74).

[22] Sue L. Cataldi describes 'flesh' and 'depth' as importantly interrelated in perceptual experience; Cataldi 1993, 57-79. On the "sensuous density" of the world in its aspect of mood, see Lingis 1996, 26-27.

[23] Dufrenne 1992/1953, 232-243. In an early work, Dufrenne suggested that there exist affective *a prioris*, an approach he later abandoned. Much of his aesthetic thinking circles around this question and the less rigidly he approaches it, the more fruitful are his suggestions. It is a pity that the later phases of his thinking seem to have received less attention; compare Chojna and Kocol 1995/1992.

[24] Art is based in human experience, which it articulates, and is thus real in the very basic sense of subjectivity. If Dufrenne's aesthetics is largely a philosophy of art, art is also relevant to human experience at large, for it is the privileged area of human expression. But if affective *a prioris* exist, they are relevant also for the experience of nature and the environment. On the role of poetry, which he sees as the privileged area of creativity, see Dufrenne 1959, 277-293 and Dufrenne 1963. The latter work and Dufrenne 1991 include discussions of nature.

[25] Dufrenne 1959, 1-50; Dufrenne 1981, 19-51; also 1992/1953, 543-549. In Dufrenne 1992/1953, 546, he enumerates three main functions of the affective *a priori*. First, it has a cosmological and constitutive function: the *a priori* is a feature of the object and constitutes the object as the particular object it is. It is also what makes

the object first exist for us. Second, in its existential function the *a priori* is a feature of the subject, which enables the subject to grasp the object. Third, the *a priori* can be the object of *a priori* knowledge. There is an *a priori* of the *a priori*, which also implies that there is no way of arguing for it. It does not have a foundation, for it is itself one. See also Husserl's discussion of "the a priori of the life-world", Husserl 1997/1970, 137-141 (par. 36).

[26] Dufrenne 1992/1953, 650. For other doubts, compare Dufrenne 1967, 53-61.

[27] Compare Gibson 1966, 46.

[28] Dufrenne 1992/1953, 408.

[29] As Noël Carroll suggests, one can speak of appropriate and inappropriate responses, Carroll 1993, 57-58.

[30] Dufrenne 1963, particularly 166-177. Here he follows Schelling's suggestions. When referring to the creative force, Dufrenne writes Nature.

[31] Hepburn 1993, 66-68.

[32] Compare Cataldi 1993, 105.

[33] Note that the Finnish *tila* means not only space and room but also 'state', as in state of mind. Related words are *mielentila, olotila* (state of mind, state of being) and *tilanne* (situation).

[34] See Howarth 1995; Sharpe 1991/1983, 93-115; Casey 1993, 168, 192, 219-222. For Casey, mood and atmosphere are related above all to living nature and wild places.

[35] See Dufrenne 1992/1953, 232-243, 549-562, 645-656.

[36] Compare Dufrenne 1992/1953, 196-197; compare 291, 365, 408-409, 488.

[37] Compare Sircello 1989, 43: "Taking the aesthetic point of view (...) implies an ability and willingness to experience the world in large part as either animated, the product of animation, or both."

[38] Compare Aristotle in *De Anima*, (Book II, 412a 1) in Durrant 1993, 22: "soul is actuality (...) in a natural body having in it the capacity of life". See also chapter seven, third section.

[39] Compare also Merleau-Ponty 1991/1964, 170.

[40] Levinas 1993/1991, 244.

[41] Compare Levinas 1987, 1-13 and 1993/1963, 83-92.

[42] Arnheim 1977.

[43] Arnheim 1972/1969.

[44] Arnheim 1972/1969, 276. Implications for architecture are discussed in Arnheim 1977 and Arnheim 1986, 319-325.

[45] Arnheim 1977, 262. Compare also Greimas' and Fontanille's (1991) structural analysis of emotions as modalities or ways of 'standing' in the world. Emotional isotopies can, for example, imply approach or restraint.

[46] Arnheim 1977, 262, 260, 263; in general 257-262.

[47] Arnheim 1977, 255.

[48] Arnheim 1977, 208.

[49] Arnheim 1977, 268.

[50] See Langer 1964.

[51] Langer 1953, 95, also 92-102; compare Langer 1964, 95-106. It seems that one possible point of comparison for the ethnic domain is Berleant's idea of a cultural aesthetics; Berleant 1991, 103 and 1992, 21-22.

[52] Langer 1953, 98-99, my italics.

[53] Langer 1953, 24-41.

[54] It may be noted that a common influence of Goodman and Langer is Ernst Cassirer.

[55] See also Richard Shusterman's criticism, noted in chapter three, second section.

[56] Goodman 1985, 647.

[57] Goodman 1985, 648.

[58] Goodman 1985, 650.

[59] Compare Bleicher 1990/1980, 223.

[60] Goodman's model seems ideally suited for questions related to our experience of abstract art, and it was originally developed in such a context.

[61] Shusterman 1997a, 133.

[62] Other forms of expression also do not assemble in art as emotional expression has done.

[63] Compare the discussion of transitive and intransitive expression in art; Scruton 1983, 49-61 and Mulhall 1995/1992, 148. But the idea that emotions normally have an object is disputable and may be caused by taking cognition as a paradigm.

[64] On icon and index, see Peirce 1932, 143, also 156-165. The angry sky appears in Howarth 1995, 109.

[65] Compare Ryle 1967/1954, 71.

[66] Goodman 1985, 650. Compare Shusterman: "For Dewey and Goodman, what matters in art is not the object but how it functions in experience. (...) The real aesthetic issue is not what properties an object permanently has but how it temporally (even if ephemerally) functions in organizing and symbolizing experience", Shusterman 1997a, 134, compare 131-136.

[67] For an overview of the ideas of functionalism in architecture, see Frampton 1985a. The idea that form follows function is expressed already in the mid-nineteenth century by the sculptor and critic Horatio Greenough; see Greenough 1969.

[68] Frampton 1985a, 178-185. The starting point was not so much the actual use of the built environment as the possibilities to create ideal surroundings for the basic human activities.

[69] Rossi seems to suggest also these latter aspects, although he does not discuss them; Rossi 1989/1982, 72, compare 62-101.

[70] Compare Sedlmayr 1968, who points to 'purification' as a central tenet of modern art.

[71] For an interesting treatment of the theme, see Frampton 1995. An interest in ecological building could be expected to increase the interest also in the aesthetic aspects of construction.

[72] Compare Scruton 1980, 211.

[73] I shall discuss Scruton's ideas on expression in architecture in the next section, under 'representative function'.

[74] Compare Arnheim 1977, 268-269.

[75] Compare chapter six, first section.

[76] Loos 1985, 108. Langer also emphasizes the monumental function of building; Langer 1964, 105.

[77] Here I agree with Scruton's views, as discussed below.

[78] For example, Gibbons 1994, Guyer 1993, Henrich 1992, Nancy 1985, Savile 1993, Schaper 1979. The idea of reflective, aesthetic judgement is developed also in contemporary critical legal studies; see, for example, Douzinas, Goodrich and Hachamowitz 1994.

[79] Savile 1993, 94. Kant speaks of beauty in terms of "*Zweckmässigkeit (...) ohne Vorstellung eines Zwecks*", Kant 1990/1790, 77, compare 58-77 (par. 10-17). Meredith translates this as "the form of *finality* in an object, so far as perceived in it *apart from the representation of an end*", Kant 1989/1928, 80.

[80] Savile 1993, 172.

[81] Harries 1997, 125.

[82] Savile 1993, 119. For this use of 'type', see Colquhon 1985/1981, 45-80 or Rossi 1989/1982, 40.

[83] Savile 1993, 164, 180.

[84] Savile 1993, 176.

[85] Crowther 1993, 142.

[86] Crowther 1993, 5.

[87] Scruton 1980, 180.

[88] Scruton 1980, 185-7.

[89] Scruton 1980, 187, 7-9.

[90] Some borderline cases of representational architecture can be pointed out, but in these the building does not strictly speaking depict, only associates with the function: a hot dog stand in the form of a hot dog, or Boullée's brothel, where the plan had the form of genitals.

[91] On double articulation, see Eco 1971, 219-223. For an illuminating discussion of representation, with an emphasis on the perceiver's response, see Sheppard 1989/1987, 8-17. Karsten Harries argues for an even wider notion of representation in architecture, which comprises not only or primarily functions, but also the building's materials. I agree that there might be a kind of natural symbolism in architecture, related to the way we inhabit and come to know the world as 'speaking to' us. But Harries' in many ways elucidating discussion is problematic in two respects. One is the idea that representation involves resemblance and a pictorial function, which suggests that there is a pre-given content of representation. The other is the idea of representation as revelation or expression, without reference, where representation collapses into presentation. Harries 1997, 85-133; in particular 130-133, 99, 121. On natural symbolism, see also Björner Torsson, who suggests that the mimetic theme in architecture is related to how bodily movements and presence are rendered; Torsson 1994.

[92] Compare Ricoeur 1976.

[93] There are also cases when a building is a continuation of the history of the place, real or imagined. For an example, see Daniels 1993, 5-37.

[94] Compare, on this primacy of the present, chapter three, second section and five, fourth section.

[95] Foucault 1988, 202-3, 209. Foucault relates the author-function to a person, whether projected or real, and applies the notion only to literature.

[96] The churches date to the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, which all are considered part of the Middle Ages, a time when the country was slowly being christianized.

[97] This is reminiscent of Hersey's descriptions of classical architecture as "a trope of sacrifice", where the holy, the taboo or the enemy were presented in ornament as defeated and bound to stone; Hersey 1989, 9, *passim*.

[98] Compare, for ideas on the reuse of monumental public art, Komar and Melamid 1994.

[99] Peirce 1932, 166. I am aware that my use of this quotation may be considered unlawful, but remember that Peirce is a rich and suggestive thinker. Note also this: "The symbol may, with Emerson's sphynx, say to man, Of thine eyes I am eyebeam.", *ibid.*, 169.

[100] Compare chapter three, second and fifth section.

[101] For an example, see the subsection "centres of administration and power" in this section.

[102] Today, the Herring market has more the character of entertainment; it is no longer primarily related to everyday life, but to a conscious, in part historical, in part political celebration of a life form which is in fact threatened and marginalized by dominant global and national trends of development. Fishermen from the +land islands in the west to Pellinge in the east still come to Helsinki to sell fish, bread, apples which were grown in those places. However, nowadays many come by van, not by boat.

[103] The connection of the car and of new shopping habits to the possibility of storing food in refrigerators and freezers is pointed out by Rybczynski 1995, 202.

[104] Rybczynski 1995, 217.

[105] For a comparison of North American versus European urbanism, see Rybczynski 1995.

[106] It is also striking if one considers the informality of picnics to belong to the sociality of family life, not to professional socializing and eating, which one would expect to take place in a restaurant.

[107] This is by no means a postmodern phenomenon. Compare the famous example of the suicides following the publication of Goethe's *Werther*, or Lotman on the Decabrists shaping their lives according to the Romantic text, Lotman 1989, 158, *passim*. Compare, on the roots of the idea of the shaping of the self, Bowie 1990.

[108] *Ny Tid* 19.9.1997.

[109] Compare Sennett 1996/1994, 52-65.

[110] Compare Werne 1987, 203.

[111] Many parks indeed correspond to the savannah type of landscape that Jay Appleton suggests most people prefer; Appleton 1986/1975.

[112] One good beginning is Anderson 1991b/1986.

[113] Given the priority of security considerations (a certain kind of road is more likely to keep drivers awake), it is probable that the same kind of thinking has characterized traffic planning in other countries, too.

[114] Waldenfels 1994, 63.

[115] Compare Virilio 1996.

[116] This might be one relevant perspective on the phenomenon of 'road rage'. For a suggestive handling on related themes, see Ballard 1995/1973; for a discussion of perverted highway-life, von Bonsdorff forthcoming.

[117] For an example, see the end of section two, chapter five.

[118] Also here, Ballard's vision is worth considering; Ballard 1996/1973.

Chapter five

FULLNESS AND OBLIVION

> *But the very places where I am are never entirely given to me, the things I see are things for me only on the condition of always withdrawing from their graspable aspects. Thus there is in perception a paradox of immanence and transcendance. Immanence, because the perceived could not be alien to the perceiver; transcendence, because it always carries a beyond of what is actually given.*[1]

There is, in a built environment, both a lack or withdrawal and a presence of meaning. There is presence because whatever a building stands for or signifies is right in front of the perceiver, here, on this spot, in this material reality, embodied by this building. This is the immanence described by Merleau-Ponty, where the perceiver relates directly to the perceived. The two share a space, a reality; they are connected in a relation of sense. But the perceived carries something beyond that which is given, so that its givenness differs from that of conceptual knowledge. The full significance of a building escapes even while it is *in this* building. It goes beyond what is accessible and present in and for perception. This is what is referred to here as transcendence.

In the built environment, precise and specified meaning is indeed often lacking; elusiveness is one face of the transcendence of environmental meaning. Often we perceive traces and signs of life, details and forms that we take to be expressive, but without knowing what caused them or what they were intended to mean. There are several sources for this surplus of environmental meaning: social, political and historical intentions, social and institutional functions, including the influence of the unplanned. Not only much of the history, but also part of the present cultural import of any built environment is usually unknown to the perceiver. The actual use of environments through different historical epochs and subjects creates countless webs of meaning which are often accessible only as an atmosphere of sense, dense but vague, as in old districts which are still inhabited and used.

The transcendence of meaning is experienced as fullness rather than absence also because the generation of meaning in the built environment is a continuous process. My life in this room becomes part of its history, as did the life of the couple who lived here for half a century before me or the workman's drawings on the cement wall during the time of the building's construction. What is not accessible anymore is forgotten rather than annihilated, so that in escaping us, it withdraws into a space of oblivion. In the continuity of life, the fullness and surplus of sense - if not of meaning as defined above - is also an effect of nature. There is growth, aging, weathering and patination, processes which similarly affect the material environment and our own bodies and intimate life. These processes touch, as threat, solace or hope, upon existential questions at the heart of human existence. In a different way, the transcendence of meaning is related to the utopian dimension of architecture. In many buildings and areas the allusive presence of something different points towards a *topos* or a *polis* of another place or time. This other place need not be a historical place which is behind us, but may be experienced as a place towards which we may go, a possibility which is integrated in everyday life and imagination while remaining different. Such utopian elements sustain our imaginative intercourse with the environment and keep it alive in experience, as part of our lives.

In this chapter, I deepen and complement themes which have arisen in previous chapters. In the first section, I discuss some articulations of the real: as ground, universe, the everyday, and as the real environment. The underlying question is whether, if experience and perception are always mediated, we do not also need a notion with which to point to something more basic which might escape mediation. A second question is whether such a notion can be successfully articulated. The discussion of the real is motivated by the intuition that constructivism falls short of illuminating the fullness of environments and their resistance to subjectivity and cultural intentions. The real, as specified in relation to some particular aspects of culture, might help us to acknowledge other than intended aspects of the human world.

In the second section, I approach place in terms of appropriation and belonging as well as locality. I particularly explore how the process of appropriation is interactive, so that environmental meaning and personal identity are related. I also discuss identity versus individuality as applied to places. These notions are, like affirmation and transcendence, ambiguously applicable to inhabitants and habitat alike: ambiguously, since the environment I have adopted is by definition a part of me, and I am a part of it.

Environmental meaning is always shared, but only in the sense of being about public space. While some elements of meaning are generally accessible, others are accessible only to particular groups. In addition, there are elements of meaning which exist only for a particular person, since they are related to personal memories. Their specific character may be of no interest to others, yet their existence is important and interesting for an understanding of how humans inhabit the world. In the third section, I discuss the role of environmental images and memory in the experience of environments, comparing these in particular to artistic and metaphorical representations of the environment. Towards the end of the section, I point to *genius loci* as a notion which might help us to acknowledge the dynamic interaction between physical features of a place and human habitation.

Even if history, memory and identity are immaterial features of the environment, they are also present and affirmed in buildings. The affirmative character of the built environment, that it claims what is rather than what is not and does so even when it does not spell out the substance of what is, is discussed in the last section. However, affirmation is accompanied by transcendence, which points to the elusiveness and unfolding of meaning. Further, if architecture stands for power, it may also contain possibilities of escape and suggest alternatives. In the final pages of this chapter I look at some strategies for getting around mere affirmation and approaching a suggestively utopian way to build.

Mediations of the real

In chapter one, where I discussed environmental perception and experience, the environment was presented as an extending totality, a field which is both infinitely continuous in the spatial-geographical sense and infinitely diversifying in its texture. Similarly in chapter three, I pointed to change and multiplicity as features of the environment, even regardless of human experience. But although there is always more to perceive, particular locations also remain themselves. Through all their obvious and less obvious changes Rome is still Rome and Berlin still Berlin. The identity of places is, to a large part, due to the fact that we identify them and orient ourselves in them, and through them in the world. I shall soon turn to a discussion of place, relating it to appropriation and to the images which are formed in perception and through the attempts to grasp places. But before that, I shall in this section reflect upon whether there is a basic matter of environment that is articulated and mediated in our representations but also resists them, and if so, what role it may play in discourse and experience. That matter I call the 'real'.

Common to my four perspectives on the real is that the real is taken to be basic to and different from any particular view of reality. The perspectives differ most importantly through what they relate the real to. The four perspectives are first, the real as earth or ground; second, the real as all there is, the universe; third, the real as the everyday and given versus the imagined, and fourth, the real environment versus visual or verbal representations.

In the first perspective, the real is contrasted with explanations, thought, discourse and symbols, all of which try to explain and structure the real, but none of which grasp it as such. The real is the matter of culture, thus other to culture. In its most radical form it becomes an unstructured, general *there is*, a notion that demonstrates an important feature of the real as ground or earth: that it can only exist as a liminal concept[2]. *There is* points to what is beyond understanding, to that which can at most touch understanding but which, when named, is already at the side of understanding and thus other than itself. The real understood as ground or earth is in one sense the foundation of any human world: it is the support and the material of a world and appears only around or between, in the fissures of the structures, material and mental, with which we construct our world. "The real is the pre-objective", as Dufrenne says.[3]

That this real is passive, mute, nonspeaking, not intent on anything, does not mean that it would be static or senseless[4]. That would presuppose

that it is only when the human being appears that the world begins to move. One listens to the murmuring of *there is*, not understanding what it is but standing out from it as a sensed and sense-giving animal. This is not just a view of the human unconscious, it is also an aspect of what the world is, amorphous. Yet psychoanalytic theory may be illuminating here, for example Julia Kristeva, who describes a basic receptacle of whatever we are as the semiotic realm or the *chora*. This is a realm of impulses and drives where there is preformation of meaning but not proper meaning, which exists only in the symbolic realm[5]. The semiotic is both a matter of the symbolic and a force that generates it, but only as energy and material, not through specific intentions. As ground in relation to a world, the semiotic precedes the symbolic only in the sense that it never becomes world or symbol, but it can also not be replaced by these. The ground or earth is never replaced, it is contemporary with a world.

If the real here is basic and originary, the reality in which we live, act and think - our world - is structured by language and other ways of making and maintaining meaning. Symbol systems are constructed on the real and try to fix it, but it resists. The real pushes our ideas of reality and calls them into question. We can never deal with the real as with a counterpart, never grasp it or give it a shape: in the face of the real, we are incompetent.[6] We are, rather, subjected to it, grasped, kneaded, pulled and pushed.

Understanding the real as a ground and matter of existence, as that which in becoming articulated will be betrayed and escape - since articulation conceals the manifold and dynamic and replaces it by conceptual identity and stasis - is illuminating for the experience of environment. It reminds us that beyond the strata of meaning and functions we are mostly aware of there is something which does not need to be articulated to exist. We may point to it, but we cannot describe it. This irreducible real is a basis which we fall back onto and finally into, in sleep or death, but it is also the origin, from which anything that is is what it is. In understanding this first meaning of the real as earth, matter and *chora* it is important to remember that it is dynamic, not static, and yet creates nothing by itself.

The second meaning of the real, the real world as totality or universe, is one that I have referred to earlier. This is reality as all there is, as everything that exists around us, with an emphasis on tangible existence and on what surrounds a human subject. The world as totality is the world in which we live and act, but it is also a world that encompasses any particular view of reality we may have and does not coincide with any such view. It is for this reason I say that the world as universe is tangible, for it is given as matter and movement, not constituted by thought. The world as totality also is a liminal notion, not because it would be untouchable or ungraspable in its individual elements, but because it extends any particular situation. The real is what is here, as things and elements, but also more than what is here for me. This is true not only of outer space, but also of the environments in which our everyday life takes place. In a normal relation to the habitat, there are always places left where we have not been and more to perceive, in addition to ongoing changes and altering situations. At this point, the idea of the real as the universe and of the real as the originary come together.

A third understanding of the real comes from contrasting the real and the fictitious. In this perspective, the real is experienced as simply here, as the world of the given and ordinary, whereas the fictitious is a not-here, a different and distant world, which is thereby also a world of the imagination. This third understanding of the real is relevant in experiences of the built environment influenced by the perception and recognition of stylistic intentions, historical references or former experiences of area types and life forms. In these experiences particular elements of the environment do not just give cues about functional affordances or facts, but evoke meanings that are to some extent unexpected and do not in an evident sense belong to the environment. These elements and meanings are, however, important parts of how a building is. We may note that in addition to built forms, imagination may be brought into play by natural elements that stand out from the environment. For example, the rock *Ukko-Koli* in Northern Karelia is an example of a natural formation that has stirred imagination and been coproductive of culture. Shining white on the deep green, forested height far over the lakes the rock became a sacred place. In being named, the rock is integrated in the culture, yet it is only as named that it functions as a border to the unnameable.[7] One may note that with such an idea of the sacred, the imaginary unreal approaches the real as ground.

If it is important to pay attention to this imaginative side in architecture, it is as important to note that in the environment so called fictions are part of the lived and inhabited world. The real and the fictive are presented together and in the same place; yet there is a need to distinguish between them precisely because of their interactions and because of the relativity of what is experienced as real and what is merely imagined. For example, the expected appearance of a school building is dependent on both geographical place and historical time, so that a design which hundred or thirty years ago looked surprising, as if addressing a distant past or future, has today become integrated into what a school, or a particular school, is. Horizons change, not only on the level of stylistic epochs, but also in the individual, due to new knowledge, experiences, associations and interpretations.[8]

If the fictitious is a not-here, a world of imagination, imagination is also fed by elements of lived experience, and these may partly be products of imagination. Such is the case, for example, with the rich and often castle-like *Jugendstil* buildings in Finland, which are associated with National Romanticism but are only distantly related to Finnish building traditions. As part of present urban experience they refer to their origin, but at the same time to an imagined world which was never real and therefore retains a utopian character. Therefore, although one can make a distinction between fancy and imagination in architecture, it must be applied with caution and case by case. One could propose that fancy in principle applies to buildings where elements refer to a fairy-tale world without connections to any lived everyday. Fancy architecture represents escape much in the way popular fiction is said to. Imagination, on the contrary, represents a world that is not elsewhere but, rather, different. It connects to the everyday and given but transforms our vision so that different aspects are noted and different directions indicated. The version of a world is thus a different way of being towards it[9] . Therefore, imagination is not just a capacity of cognitive value but also of ethical value, and the elements of our environments that stimulate imagination can tell us things not just about the world we inhabit but also about ourselves, as inhabitants. More precisely: imagination makes us tell these things. But as I have already suggested, for the capacity of imagination to come into play there must be a possible integration, at some level of imagination, between the not-here and the here. Thus we imagine the real world, whereas we fancy a world in which reality does not count.

Fancy may prevail in situations where there is a clash of reality and dreams, but environmental fancies may also become part of our life and fulfil a specific function. This is the fanciful of the amusement park and of other places meant purely for pleasure, such as Bernard Tschumi's follies in *La Villette* in Paris or the much earlier Royal Pavilion in Brighton - bordering on fancy, but a ritualized fancy, as in ritualized behaviour. As Walter Benjamin describes the *Alcazar* in Seville, a building where fancy reigns in an innocence without illusion, it is different from cases where the fanciful is introduced as a cosmetic device on a suppressed reality:

> *An architecture that follows fantasy's first impulse. It is undeflected by practical considerations. These rooms provide only for dreams and festivities, their consummation. Here dance and silence become the* **leitmotifs**, *since all human movement is absorbed by the soundless tumult of the ornament.*[10] .

The fourth understanding of the real is provided by contrasting the world as it is lived with representations of reality. It is certainly true that we approach reality through such representations of it that we are familiar with: the inhabited world is always mediated. But a stronger claim, such that representations have a priority over and before the lived world is problematic, for it only reverses the naivety of the belief that we could perceive the world as it is. Representations are, no less than the world, approached and perceived in some way, and no one way is the only way. How we perceive pictures or verbal descriptions of a place we have visited is influenced by actual experiences, as our on-location perception is influenced by second-hand knowledge. But there is a difference in kind between these influences.

A relationship to a place that is established through actual visits is denser and closer to the real - in any of its versions - than a relationship which is the product of reading or looking at pictures. As Merleau-Ponty notes, compared to the real, the imaginary lacks depth[11] . Perceptual experience, including affectivity, is basic in the sense that it gives us not just a view of the place, but a sense of what the place is like as an inhabitable space. It also gives us a sense of the infinity of the concrete place, which always offers new aspects and new situations. Further, there is the double presence: not only is the environment there for me, I am also exposed and open to it. But to say that perceptual experience gives us a dense and real sense of place is not to underrate the role of descriptions and depictions. Our idea of a place we have not visited - a battlefield, a city whose beauty has only been described to us - may indeed by intense, but compared to one based on first-hand experience it is flat and at most two-dimensional. It is also dependent on a perspective which was chosen for us in advance by someone else, and it provides no possibility for interaction. We have knowledge about the place, but we do not know the place.

In all the perspectives on the real discussed above - the real as ground, the real world as everything, reality versus imagination and reality versus representation - the real is the basis. The real, in any of its versions, is in different ways characterized by infinity and overflow. In our world, in the world, there are perspectives, articulations, life forms, boundaries and structures, but no one perspective has a natural priority. We may always go further or round the corner, change perspective. Therefore, the real cannot be understood as a static foundation; it is never given to us as in its entirety or as a totality, whatever we have will change. For the same reason human understanding is not autonomous: we do not simply order the world, the world is not laid before us so as to be grasped in any one moment, but appears without end[12]. The infinity of the world is *in* the finite, appearing here and now, and this infinity is perhaps more important for our lives than an infinite extension of space[13].

In addition to seeing the real and reality as something in which we live, which surrounds us and extends beyond our reach at any moment, there is also a givenness and reality to our frames of experience and perception at any moment. Thus in everyday life different kinds of knowledge and experience are blended, and together they form the context of our perception of the built environment. Here, we must be sensitive to the distinction of acquired and present experience: we are experienced experiencers of the environment, and our former experiences inform our present experience of an environment at the same time as they may be informed by it. There is the example of rooms we remember from our childhood, which later appear to have shrunken.

Particularly in the perception of buildings or areas which are new or which we do not know, former experiences and our values together constitute a horizon, an outlook, which may or may not be relevant to the intentions of the planners but which nevertheless forms and transforms our present perception of the building or area. The existence of these kinds of frames is undeniable, yet we are not dealing here with something real quite in the sense suggested above, but with former, mediated reality. This has, in common with the real, a changing, dynamic character. I shall now look somewhat

shelter Constructing a bomb shelter, 8th April 1940, HCM, photo Roos more closely on the interaction of former and present experience as it frames our perception of buildings.

In the previous chapter I did not separate two perspectives on, or grounds for, the identity and character of an area, perspectives which in experience interact rather than simply fuse. One is connected to discursive knowledge and to the institutional, defined functions of the area; the other to more tacit experiences of the area, its atmosphere and felt character, which importantly includes life. These are, in experience, interdependent, but it may be useful to make the distinction for critical and analytic purposes. The idea that what an environment is and how it is interact - that the design of a building influences our ideas of the function it serves and the reverse - indicates that there are two sources of meaning and character, that these come from two directions that might in this context be called knowledge and experience. Knowledge is given outside the situation and is about facts, whereas experience originates in the situation and concerns, primarily, perceived and explored affordances and appearances.

We may speak of a solemn, a sacral, or a market place atmosphere and in doing this, we refer to and utilize former experience of situations where we knew the actual function of the building. We then use the characterization to point out the particular way in which the building is, for example, a school. But we may, in cases where we do not know the function, go wrong in our understanding of an area or a building: it looks like a prison, but is a school; it looks like an apartment block, but houses a ministry. We have learnt the cues by which we make these inferences partly through immediately experiencing actual environments, but partly mediatedly, through representations of environments or through a general familiarity with conceptions, values and the history of a culture. The assumed mood of a prison or of a kindergarten may be as much dependent on our ideas about what life in a prison or childhood is and should be like, as on personal experience and familiarity with such environments. Our familiarity with institutional functions is never a purely cognitive matter, but laden with evaluative elements: not only do we know or infer what goes on in the environment, we also relate to it. Such a responsive and responsible relation of citizens to their institutions is also desirable.

We have some competence, learned by experience, in inferring what kind of area we are in, but interpretation can go wrong. On the other hand, architects and planners can and do utilize this general experience to characterize new buildings in different ways. A university can be given a residential character, as is the case with some campuses, or a parliament house may be designed as a temple. However, these characterizations are added to the function of the building; they do not replace them. Therefore, there are no guarantees that citizens will experience the characterization as it was intended; it may be experienced as convincing and as adding to the value of the building, but it may also, if it does not fit the idea of the whole, turn against the building. One could perhaps say that in the former case, imaginative design deepens our understanding of an institution, whereas in the latter case, fanciful forms disintegrate the whole. There is always the possibility to mix characters and design against expectations, but it must be remembered that the result is dependent on cultural conceptions, ideals and values, not just on formal and design-related concerns.

Another way, more restricted but also clarifying, of looking at the perception of elements of the environment is to distinguish paradigmatic and syntagmatic contexts. The paradigmatic context is provided by such parameters as style, function and the historical origin of a building: it is a vertical comparison to what is directly perceptible in this environment. In the history of architecture, single buildings are often approached paradigmatically: style and building type are focused upon and the building is compared to a set of buildings or to some examples of buildings of a similar or related style and type. This is useful for understanding the intentions of design and planning, but if we are also interested in the perception and experience of architecture, a merely paradigmatic approach is not enough. A building is encountered in the midst of other elements, as part of a city or a landscape, and even in cases where the appearance of the building is strongly influenced by paradigmatic contexts the syntagmatic context is irreducible. In the syntagmatic approach, elements of an environment are perceived in relation to each other, as part of the same continuous tissue. If the paradigmatic context is temporal and vertical, the syntagmatic context is spatial and horizontal. The single building appears in the context of adjacent buildings, natural elements and people. This actual context may to a considerable degree be the result of haphazard, conflicting and unrelated intentions and lines of development, and so the syntagmatic perspective might present us with a fragmented situation, compared to the consistent narratives which tend to result from typological and stylistic developments. But, as I shall suggest in chapter seven, this heterogeneity may be an advantage from the point of view of the presentation of power, and of actual social life.

Again, if the distinction of paradigmatic and syntagmatic contexts is useful as an analytic tool, the actual experience of the environment is mixed. But it is worth pointing out that the distinction is not identical to the one of former versus present experience. The way we perceive both paradigmatic and syntagmatic contexts is, for example, dependent on former experience. The difference between these pairs of distinction, and a reason for their overlapping, is that they belong to different perspectives on the environment. The distinction between paradigmatic and syntagmatic abstracts from experience, which it tends to objectify, whereas the distinction between former and present experience aims to be concrete and close to experience. But the closer we get, the closer, also, become the areas and perspectives we try to distinguish. The real is not only mediated into the kind of overall image which may be compared to a landscape painting, but also on the minute level of perception, on the level of details, moments and situations where our presence, touching the world, is impossible to disregard. Therefore I shall, once more, turn to the subject of experience and address the notions of appropriation, place and environmental image. These may be keys for understanding how meaning is experienced as found, anchored and originating in the environment.

Appropriation and locus

When we attend to the environment, this might be because of it or because of ourselves. An interest, a feeling, an insight related to what we were thinking about or discussing can make us look up, look out, and the situation may then be marked in our memory as surroundings on the way to becoming a place. This can take place almost anywhere, relative to exterior or subjective conditions, cultural or natural elements, for example the weather, our mood, or our occupation. These experiences are not dependent only on an interaction of subject and world; there is, importantly, the presence or company of others, with exchanging of looks, borrowing of appearances, seeing the world through another's eyes, being seen. "I borrow myself from the other."[14]

From the point of view of how the built environment is experienced, it is not enough to point out the relation between buildings and the institutions they represent or the ethnic domains they constitute, for this view overlooks the contribution of the experiencing subject. But there is a relation between an overall image of an environment, on the one hand, and the relation of the experiencing subject to that environment, on the other, where the latter comprises the modes of perceiving (by walking or bus), former experiences and knowledge, and his personal relation to that environment (resident, visitor, tourist, city planner). I shall therefore develop a perspective on environmental meaning that goes from appropriation and belonging to locality, place and environmental image. This provides, I hope, some additional understanding of the interactions of perception and memory in environmental experience.

The term 'appropriation' is used in various approaches to describe a sense of belonging between experiencer and environment, for example in environmental psychology, theory of architecture and environmental philosophy. The emphasis and the assumptions vary, and at this point I do not want to commit myself to any one of these approaches, although they all describe important aspects of environmental experience and human experience at large. But it seems that it would be fruitful to complement appropriation with the notion of belonging, which is more open in its connotations. I shall start by presenting a general idea of appropriation and then try to clarify and exemplify it; finally I discuss some points where different interpretations and criticisms have been presented.

Generally, 'appropriation' refers to an evolving relation of subject and place. The relation is graded and nonexclusive: we belong more or less to a place and may have close relationships to many places. Further, there is a sense in which, when as a result of appropriation a place becomes part of me, I also become part of that place[15]. Appropriation is two-directional: we both give and receive meaning. In some cases, particular events or situations are important for our relation to a place, whereas in others the importance of a place is based on long-term habitual and unspectacular use. Cultural traditions which relate groups to particular areas are important as well, and so is the tacit environment, the horizon consisting of the types of environments we are used to and familiar with.

I shall begin the discussion of appropriation at its most basic level, at its roots in perception considered as generally getting to know the world, but also from the other side, with strangeness. It could be assumed that in visiting an area for the first time, strangeness is an important feature of experience[16]. But if the view of perception discussed in chapter one is correct, strangeness is not a necessary ingredient of experiencing an environment for the first time. Everyday experience also speaks against a general applicability of strangeness: in many cases we feel that we recognize an environment on the first visit and may even feel at home there. Here strangeness is relevant only on reflection, when we have thought about the fact that we are nonresidents; it is not part of how we immediately, prereflectively, feel about the place. This is not to deny that there are cases when we prereflectively feel ourselves to be strangers in an environment or feel it as strange to us. The point is that in many of these cases strangeness itself is something we recognize: something suggests the uncanny or contradicts our expectations, so that we become aware that we do not know this place. Strangeness may also be felt in a place we feel strongly against, for example as when visiting a former concentration camp: we encounter something we do not want to let near to us.

If strangeness is not part of the prereflective level of experience of a first visit, this does not mean that it has no place in experience. In a cognitive approach, as in attempts to interpret the environment - for example in trying to orient oneself in order to get somewhere or in wondering what function a certain building could have - strangeness may announce itself or even be the condition that prompts us to attempt interpretation in the first place[17]. But it then seems that we discuss interpretation as a reflective and self-conscious activity of understanding; a perspective which does not suffice in reflecting on environmental perception and interaction. Interpretation distorts environmental perception by situating the subject outside of or in front of rather than within the environment. The model is appropriate for situations in which we look at vistas, pictures or maps of a city which we try to understand in a global way. This is not necessarily how we encounter a new area, and it is an artificial rather than a natural, in the sense of normal, approach. The normal approach is, rather, to walk into an area, feeling one's way and the area in a gradually unfolding process, where the environment is unknown rather than strange. However, it must be granted that due in part to changing conditions of perception, the cognitive attitude may become increasingly predominant in environmental experience. Contemporary transportation, where we suddenly land in a new place, forces us more and more into an interpretive pattern of behaviour: there are fewer occasions for gradual, intimate knowledge and relatively more abstract information, more signs and less reliance on our bodies.

Nevertheless, if we have a possibility to perceive the environment in the pedestrian mode, we are from the start appropriating the place through our movements, which at the same time are perceptions of the place. There are many reasons for conferring a special status to the pedestrian mode as a way of getting to know - in the sense of getting familiar with - an environment, all related to the degree of interaction of human being and environment it allows. If we begin by looking at the amount of sensations and the relative accessibility of the environment to a perceiver, open air experiences are incomparably rich in sensory impulses[18]. This is, naturally, for better and for worse: we may be blinded by sun or snow, but regardless of whether the experience is pleasant or unpleasant, it is immediate. In the open air we are directly subjected to visual, auditive and olfactory impressions, and we can feel the wind as well as the humidity and temperature of the air. The kinaesthetic interaction of body and environment is also both stronger and less mediated when we walk, compared to any other mode of getting somewhere[19]. Admittedly, there is kinaesthetic interaction also in driving, but it is an interaction with the road rather than with the multidimensional places which extend around the driver. Access to place is in fact very limited when we use a car, although the interdependence of the appearances of place and the actions of the body is there, so that we may know a route in our body. The driver knows the highway more intimately and in a different way than the passenger[20]. But if we turn back from the highway to those environments where we can move either by car or by foot, there is another difference in the relation of body and environment to heed. As pedestrians, we use only our bodies in exploring the place: as units of environmental interaction we are just this body, not body plus bicycle or body plus car[21]. When we climb up to have a view we repeat, confirm, perhaps also deepen our former understanding of steepness - the sensations of muscles and limbs, the heaviness of our body, feelings of tiredness and triumph - at the same time as we grasp this slope. Understanding steepness is here relative to our body. Similarly, we realize a distance by traversing it, and the experienced length of a distance therefore varies according to the fitness of the perceiver as well as to the terrain. Some measuring or scaling of subject to environment, environment to subject, is performed in all kinds of travelling, but a decisive difference between motorized transportation and walking is that in the former a direct relation of body and environment is not established.

Put in a Bergsonian way, in the pedestrian mode the objective extension of space and the subjective duration of time converge[22]. This is one important reason for the special role of walking as a mode of aesthetic environmental experience. A point of similar existential - in addition to practical - importance is, finally, that in the pedestrian mode we are free to choose and change our paths through the urban environment at almost any moment; a very different situation compared to transportation where, whether we steer the vehicle ourselves or not, we have to stick to the road. In walking, it is also easy to stop, to look around, to have a chat, to make a detour or to pop in somewhere on the way.

If the environment is not strange in a fundamental way, it may become strange. This may happen if there is a decrease in the possibilities to relate to the environment, or if the subject seeks a totalizing understanding, or if the environment is experienced as hostile. Other reasons for strangeness may exist, and still there is a basic tacit knowing, a familiarity of world and perceiver. Although walking can be seen as an act of appropriation it is not, and is also not experienced as, appropriation from scratch. When walking around in an unfamiliar environment we do not confront it as an alien object for which we must find the code, but as different and knowable. Familiar aspects, elements and modes of acquaintance are always included in the experience.

The givenness of the experience, the evidence not only of the environment around me but also of my presence in and to the environment, as part of it, certainly play a significant role here. Our basic relationship to the environment is one of perceptual trust, not doubt. Also, our walking exploration of an environment lacks, rather than has, a clear beginning. Often we approach and enter an area gradually. No precise point of decision to go in a particular direction can be indicated; decisions usually come with our movements, which are influenced by both environment and our intentions[23]. We do not have to reflect or decide before we walk in the area. Our immersion in the environment - which is not a fusion but simultaneity and interdependence - also explains the fact that we experience the environment as one and continuous, especially in its basic natural aspects: topography, vegetation, climate. Thus, when we cross a border we might at the same time be aware that political boundaries are abstractions which have nothing to do with the land. Standing at the border, *in situ*, the border is not a dividing line but an area.[24]

The environment is here, recognized and recognizable, even when many buildings remain unidentified - which is the case in our own as well as in foreign cities. A new city is already here for me but also becomes closer to me through my experiences of it, as my New York or my Copenhagen. What was before going there conceived of as a being there, in a strange place, becomes being here, in this place[25]. The more time we spend in an area, the more depth it acquires. More possibilities, memories and situations are integrated in our perception of the area and, on the other hand - which is the other, inseparable side of appropriation - the time spent in the area and the activities we have performed become part of what we are. We invest ourselves in areas, which become places - and in return we are recognized. This doublesidedness - that in getting to know an area we at the same time receive material and perspectives for our selfperception - is a key feature of appropriation.

Each situation of being somewhere, thus already the first, has a potential existential density, and for this reason one could call any attentive turning towards an environment an experience of place: there is at least a preliminary characterization. There are atmosphere, affordances and character; notions that suggest, in cautious balance, the interrelatedness of an affective, practical and cognitive dimension. How we perceive these aspects will change with time. The overall experience will change, not because our former perception is corrected or exchanged, but because later experiences and information are added to and fused to the old. To see a familiar place in an unfamiliar way does not cause a conflict with our former perception; it is an additional view that reveals an additional side, but a side that was never excluded, although it was also not explicitly included in the earlier perceptions. On each occasion we perceive certain things or aspects and miss others, although what we miss might have been there all the time. In the terminology of the late Merleau-Ponty, the invisible inhabits the visible, but does not occupy all of it[26].

At this point, it must be emphasized that our relations to places cannot be seen just as relations to cities or areas, considered as material structures, but that social and cultural aspects are included in experiencing, in how life is lived, areas perceived and inhabited[27]. From an individual's point of view, these immaterial aspects are inherited and given in a way which is similar to the givenness of the material environment itself: neither is unchangeable, but in relation to both an individual is dependent on structures which are social and cultural, and which cannot therefore be freely chosen.

Although it makes sense to say that "the environment is not observed, it is explored"[28] there is, as I have suggested, a passive side to environmental experience as well. As we move in the environment, we are subjected to it. But as we move in a material environment, we also move in a cultural environment, which we are not subjected to in the same way. Whereas the environment in its material aspects is immediately and indubitably here, the cultural environment is more elusively around. Also, there is not just one cultural environment: as inhabited, a city is multiple, and a culture as a whole consists of individual, even if to a large extent shared, viewpoints[29]. If we look at the situation from an individual's viewpoint, there is on the one hand what is around me - the life of this city - but, on the other, my life, my knowledge, desires and prejudices. These two do not necessarily coincide, and there is not just nonidentity, but also conflicts and misperceptions.

This nonidentity and lack of coincidence should warn us against understanding appropriation in terms of ownership, where what I appropriate belongs to me. In such an understanding, the place becomes a projection of the ego, where neither neighbours nor environment is actually encountered. Actually, I belong here, too, I belong to this place. The habitat is in reality lived and perceived as an extensive and continuous opening of possibilities, of habitual and nonhabitual affordances, challenges and risks. This should be the starting point for a description of the relation between humans and environment. Also wonder and attention speak against one-sided projection; an emotional, engaged component is included in appropriation. Cognition does not constitute places, and activities are always performed in an atmosphere.

The above does not mean that aspects related to the actual life of an individual in an area do not play an important role in appropriation or implacement. The relevance of the perspective of habitation in our experiences and perceptions of areas arises from basic, individual and concrete experiences of living somewhere, experiences which are fundamental for our understanding of the world but also of ourselves and our place in the world[30]. The events and memories related to an environment certainly vary among individuals and may thus be subjective even in the narrow sense, which includes idiosyncrasy, but the existence of such ties is not only an intersubjectively valid feature, but also necessary for the existence of meaning and value in the environment.

Territory and belonging, as complementary perspectives on place, are first and foremost concrete terms which point to the close ties between an individual and a particular environment, including a group of people in which the individual includes herself[31]. The idea that territoriality "even when there are no boundaries" operates "primarily in the area of social interaction" emphasizes the importance of the use of space, thus also of the functions of building, in establishing an environment that is experienced as mine[32]. The meaning of 'having' relevant to appropriation is to have access to and to be able to use; legal ownership is secondary, although it may secure or impede our possibilities to use an area. My spoon is the one I eat with, my tree the one I like to stand under, my bakery where I buy my bread. In the last example, the aspect of recognition is clear: they know me and I know them. But is there not a sense of recognition in returning to the same tree, the same bench, the same rock as well?

Returning to a certain street need not include actual social recognition - as in greeting and being greeted by an acquaintance - and yet it may significantly include familiarity of a social kind. This is what Walter Benjamin describes in two fragments.

> *At the beginning of the long downhill lane that leads to the house of -, whom I visited each evening, is a gate. After she moved, the opening of its archway stood henceforth before me like an ear that has lost the power of hearing.*[33]
>
> *A highly embroiled quarter, a network of streets that I had avoided for years, was disentangled at a single stroke when one day a person dear to me moved there. It was as if a searchlight set up at this person's window dissected the area with pencils of light.*[34]

In both examples, the details of buildings are experienced as having undergone change in their perceptual capacities. In the first case, the change is a decrease in the receptivity of the archway in relation to the experiencing subject; in the second, an increase in the communication of the window with the subject. The first may be read as a description of the experiential fact that it is no longer worthwhile for the subject to direct himself towards the archway, either imaginatively or by physically going there. He will have nothing in return, no response: the archway is closed for him, absence has taken the place of presence. The archway may remain a place of memory, but that is a different thing which does not change the emptiness included in the present experience. The second, on the contrary, describes a change where a point of orientation is introduced in an environment where formerly there was no such point, and a path is established. Landmarks, the example suggests, are perceived and change the perception of the environment, but perception is dependent on more than the senses alone.

A final perspective on appropriation, which may be seen as distant from the perceptual, psychological and commonsensical views presented above, is Heidegger's *Ereignis*, for which 'appropriative event' is hardly an elegant, but perhaps a fairly just translation. Although Heidegger does not develop and discuss this notion in relation to environment but in the context of poetry, I find it suggestive and useful for the environment, if not unproblematic, and while his notion might not fit environmental experience, I assume the right to be inspired by it, for the idea of an opening of the world makes sense. The sense is, however, made differently from how it is made in language. To be applicable to environmental experience, the event must be broadened and specified.

It is evident that event is one basic meaning of *Ereignis*, but it is not enough to elucidate what Heidegger wants to convey[35]. In the book *Unterwegs zur Sprache* there are some passages in which this becomes clear. For example, Heidegger speaks of "the occurrence of appropriation by which poetry and thinking are directed into their proper nature" and in another context, he describes appropriation with the verb *eignen*, which has been translated as owning[36]. This suggests an aspect of belonging, but also of being itself and being appropriate for something; there is both a transitive and an intransitive meaning of the term[37]. Bearing in mind that *Ereignis* is developed to describe an event which takes place in reading poetry, the contribution of the subject is irreducible: "appropriating, holding, self-retaining is the relation of all relations. Thus *our* saying - always an answering - remains forever relational"[38].

Since my aim is not an exegesis of *Ereignis* in Heidegger, but to take heed of what the notion valuably suggests if applied to environmental experience, I stop reading here and move into what I regard as *lacunae*, especially with regard to environment. To begin with, if the appropriative event is an occurrence by which something is directed into its proper essence, and if this event takes place in relation to the environment, the multiplicity and

historicity of environment must be included in this essence.[39] There is a gap between Heidegger's descriptions of a general, almost timeless temporality and the concrete historicity that environments, and especially built environments, participate in and constitute. Even his description of the Greek temple in the essay on the work of art is not an analysis of the actual functions of an actual building, but a general description of how a temple generally (at all times) creates a place[40]. It illuminates how a building may constitute history but not how it participates in history. There would be more to say, for history is concrete and multiple.

If the concreteness of history is not emphasized by Heidegger, the same goes for the subject as a particular individual. Language speaks rather than persons. But in language and environment alike, the risk of simplification and of being trapped by determinism are considerable if we do not pay attention to individuals and allow for the disorder that their multiple and sometimes conflicting rationalities and irrationalities will introduce in a theoretical picture. However, it is the way the appropriative event can be seen as a node of meanings, from both the *there* side of place and the *here* side of the actual, experiencing, concrete subject that makes it fruitful for understanding the experience of environments as meaningful and valuable[41]. The opening up which takes place in the appropriative event is, if it is an opening of the world as it is, necessarily an opening not just from a certain angle but also from and in a certain situation which is concrete and substantial, although multifaceted. On either side, environment or subject, the appropriative event is individual and individualizing.

At this point, one may observe that appropriative event and aesthetic environmental experience, especially in its more revelatory modes, may be seen as related, or as complementary ways to conceptually handle the same kind of experience. There are certainly overlappings, but also differences. The appropriative event is, compared to an aesthetic mode of perceiving, more intent on the environment as a something: a place. Also in the present section, I have at many points touched upon place, a notion that was discussed in chapter three, where my focus was on the environment rather than on the subject. Here, I would reconnect place and experience, a connection that is implied in the various understandings of appropriation and place and that leads to a different focus. The present discussion is thus not a replacement or a correction of the earlier, I just look at the question from the other side. It is, for example, worth remembering that an unknown place may be recognized and experienced as a place due to some place characteristics that exist prior to our experience of the place, although the actualization of these features is dependent on us and on that we are experienced in certain ways. Thus on travelling, one may find a square or a district which, without reminding of any particular city, is recognizable and makes sense due to one's former experiences of urban areas with a similar layout and functions.

There are at least three ways to use the word place. First, we may generally talk about place as an opposite to space, in order to point out that the environment has substance, history and meaning. Second, we may talk of places in a geographical sense to point to locations. Third, there is the subjective sense of place related to appropriation and belonging, where place is used to point out the intimate and personal links, the bonding of subject and environment. I shall start from the third approach, but then suggest that without the stability of location, there is no implacement, in a stronger sense, of human beings[42]. A place, which has a certain character, both provides humans with meaning and receives meaning from the lives that are lived in it. Because of the number of people who may live in and traverse an urban place and the alterations and changes in appearance any place constantly undergoes, at different paces, this is, however, not a situation of closed circularity. To repeat, the appropriative relation is not one of ownership, but one of belonging.

The meaning of places is there only if it is maintained in some way, by agents, and is thus subject to change. If there is a semantic and functional openness to places, Heidegger's discussion of place is promising precisely in its openness[43]. In the essay "Bauen Wohnen Denken" he approaches the question of place through the example of a bridge. He first points out that the bridge "*gathers* the earth as landscape" - landscape here referring to the natural environment - and then goes on to note the social or cultural function of bridges, where people pass towards various destinations. Thus the bridge not only gathers the earth as landscape, but is also a point of contact between places where people live, work or perform other activities. The bridge performs this function through supporting, and is in that way part of the communication between places. Heidegger now turns to a more metaphysical perspective. "The bridge gathers in *its* way earth and sky, the godlike and the mortals. Gathering is with an old word of our language called 'thing'."[44]. I suggest that we pass over the suggestion about 'earth and sky' but pay some attention to *thing* in the general sense suggested by the word in its old German meaning, which is also a contemporary meaning in Scandinavian languages. *Ting* means in Swedish besides thing (object) also a court session, and in Norway and Denmark the parliament is called *Stortinget* (the big thing). *Ting* is thus a public meeting of political and law-giving or law-affirming character, where common matters are decided. *Ting* is not an object, but an event. As a public and common event, it is situated in the open, in contrast to private territory, and creates a public space, a space for the community and for communication. In creating a space for the community, it also creates community.

To return to Heidegger's text: the way of gathering of the bridge is by providing an abode (*Stätte*) for what is gathered, and he says that the bridge does this by being itself a locus (*Ort*)[45]. To translate *Ort* as locus is an attempt to preserve the semantic dimensions of the German word, which may refer to a specific geographical place or region (*Ortsname* as place name), but also more abstractly to, for example, a geometrical region. Here we may also call into mind Heidegger's explanation of the verb *erörtern*, which means "to

point out the proper place or *site* of something, to situate it, and second, to heed that place or *site*. (...) Originally, the word 'site' suggests a place in which everything comes together, is concentrated."[46]. The locus is thus the somewhere of something, but it is also a locality which gives room for other things and where some things are at home.

At this point, a comparison to Aldo Rossi's discussion of the locus in his theory of architecture can be useful, for there are illuminating similarities to Heidegger. Also here, I shall do my reading on the basis of what makes sense[47]. Rossi describes locus as a singular place or artefact, as, in his terms, "determined by its space and time, by its topographical dimensions and its form, by its being the seat of a succession of ancient and recent events, by its memory". Its structure is the "relationship between a certain specific location and the buildings that are in it". In Viollet-le-Duc's theory, as Rossi observes, "the locus participates as a unique and physical place," and even in the universal space of the Catholic church, singular points may be identified through particular events.[48] But the relation of building and site is not something that takes place just once, it is a continuous relation. A potential for transformation is inherent in the locus, and therefore Rossi's descriptions of historical examples are pertinent for the present as well[49].

In some descriptions, Rossi is remarkably close to Heidegger, as in the following:

> *the building, the monument, and the city become human things par excellence; and as such, they are profoundly linked to an original occurrence, to a first sign, to composition, permanence, and evolution, and to both chance and tradition. As the first inhabitants fashioned an environment for themselves, they also formed* ***a place*** *and established its uniqueness. (...)in the ancient world and in the Renaissance {architecture} shaped a context. Its forms changed together with the larger changes of a site, participating in the constitution of a whole and serving an overall event, while at the same time constituting an event in itself. Only in this way can we understand the importance of an obelisk, a column, a tombstone. Who can distinguish anymore between an event and the sign that marks it?*[50]

Heidegger similarly emphasizes that it is always a building that creates a locus (*Ort*), which in turn provides spaces or bounded room. A building is a thing which is a locus[51]. In a perspective of cultural functions, both Heidegger's and Rossi's suggestions on building and place are functional: they focus on the activities and symbolism gathered in a building, considered as a particular geographically and historically situated artefact, not on its design. A locus helps us to get our bearings in the world, not only in a geographical, but also in an existential sense, personal as well as collective. A locus is a locus of things past and a condition for things to come; it is inseparable from life as it unfolds around it and through it, of activities and of situations, which are made possible through the locus. Without locality or implacement, nothing can occur and without the particular locus, events would occur differently. But we must also note a mutual transcendence, on the one hand, of the life of an individual or a culture and, on the other, of what is gathered in and by the locus. These are processes that touch upon and nourish each other, but are not confined to each other's domains. Locus is thus place, but place understood as a nodal point in a larger, inhabited environment. It does not point to the identification of the substance of a place, but to the coming together of the natural elements of a landscape and human activities, which should be understood in terms of individuality rather than identity. To identify the substance or *quale* of a place is risked by using the notion of *genius loci*; a risk, since it conducts thinking towards a closure of the meaning of the place, and thus of the place as inhabited. On the other hand, the locus would not be a locus if it were not sedimented, and if it did not have character and structure it could not provide room for activities. The point is only that it is not finished.

Of the three meanings of place listed earlier, locus belongs with the second, the geographically and empirically defined. Locus also illuminates it, for it brings out the historical and cultural features that are part of and may be perceptible in the built environment, so that it appears as place already before appropriation has taken place. However, the idea of place as locus is not relevant only in a collective perspective; it has relevance for an individual, psychological perspective on place as well[52]. Events take place and activities are located in our personal life as well as on the shared level of community, although the former may not be perceptible for others. On both levels, activities and events characterize places, sometimes in directly perceptible ways, sometimes as a framing that, while itself invisible, structures the visible.

The importance of personal experience raises the question whether we could not, on the personal level at least, talk of impermanent, moving settings as places? For example, in public or private transportation incidents and discussions may occur, or there may be a general, characteristic atmosphere, so that we would be tempted to call a certain bus line a place. Let me take an example from my childhood Helsinki, or *Helsingfors* as it is called in my native tongue, the bus number 13 which took me to school for two years, before it was discontinued as unprofitable. It was a short route through central Helsinki. In the morning, I was sometimes alone with the maternal ticket collector as we drove along the Esplanade, but in the afternoon, the bus was filled with loud and giggling, sometimes singing older girls from my school, who by their behaviour proved one prejudice about Swedish-speaking Finns[53]. There were other acquaintances, for example the old lady who sometimes offered money for ice-cream. My cousin, for whom this line was not optimal, joined me in the afternoon for social reasons. Atmosphere is one of the most important features of a place: it is through a participatory feeling that we connect to places and it is largely through affectivity, or because of it, that we remember the place, or the locus, the space that used to hold us. Feeling comfortable is engaging and activating: in that

situation, one draws the atmosphere into one's nostrils, exchanges a look with another person, addresses and is addressed. Let me note that there is a positive aspect of appropriation: when we turn towards or let ourselves fall into an environment, we do it in pleasure and appreciation. An unpleasant environment is, on the contrary, kept at bay, which is not to say that it does not influence us. Bus number 13 had an atmosphere, an interior space of its own, different from all other buses which just looked identical. But like other buses, it also had its own, particular relation to the city: the streets, the stops and the passengers that were regular and expected parts of it.

If a bus route may constitute a place, can a building which has been moved from its original location also do so? This was formerly a common practice with log buildings in Finland. But despite much continuity in the interior of the building and, possibly, a similarity of surroundings, it is not the same place, for place is always local, geographically specified or stable. Locality is part of the individuality of a place in the same way as my given particularity. That I am this being, here, is my essential indivisibility.

Image, memory, genius loci

The habitat and its places are complex in many ways. In addition to topography, history and the present uses of an environment, there is also the experienced complexity of situations and atmosphere. In ordinary life this does not normally constitute a problem, but offers richness and depth. In a theoretical perspective the situation may, however, be puzzling. If the environment is complex and changing, if there is no one privileged perspective, then where does the stability, character and identity of an environment reside? Maybe it resides fluidly, without strict boundaries, like the images we live with. I shall presume that an environmental image is our overall idea of an area, which should not be confused with a picture[54]. It is a subjective representation of an area which may be more or less correct and which is based not only on firsthand experience and memories, but also on mediated information, general expectations or the reputation of an area. This image gives access to the area, but may be one-sided or deceptive, and depending on the strength of our prejudices, experience may or may not correct it. In dealing with images, we also deal with projections, and these involve values.

For example, when we perceive an environment as preserved or destroyed the judgement is not based on grounds that are objective in any straightforward sense, but adopted in a certain cultural context, where our ideas of the future of that particular environment, including the desirability of that future, play a role. For some of those who lost their homes to the Soviet Union in 1940 and again in 1944, Karelia is a lost and destroyed land. This means that the visitor is not prepared to appreciate its present state, and perceives what now exists only as sad fragments of former beauty. There is no denying that many things are bad and yet, for a person without those roots, for example the city of Viipuri (or Viborg) is still, and through its ruination, a touchingly beautiful city, not dead but surviving, albeit as a sleeping and aged beauty.

Although the image of an environment includes projection, the image must not be understood as finished or closed, but as open to transformations. The looseness of the notion - environmental image, *genius loci* - is a strength in that it keeps it open to the continuous, manifold character of environment and environmental experience. I take image as a starting point, for it is a broader term and better applicable to everyday life on the personal and the collective level. We live with our images but, on the other hand, we also suppose that an urban area has a certain general image. Images of areas can exist in a fairly unreflected way, but when we deal with the environment, talk about it or make decisions about where to move, we are influenced by them.

I shall start by developing a general understanding of environmental image, but already in a general perspective, the image is in important ways a product of memory, which shall be my second theme. Third, even if images in a sense are simply there, they are not uninfluenced by visual or verbal depictions of areas such as maps, pictures, narratives, works of art. Fourth, I shall turn to an additional perspective on environmental image, namely as metaphor, which is not as such an additional source of elements. As a preliminary articulation the environmental image may be compared to metaphor, understood as an expression which includes the acknowledgement of that which cannot be neatly defined. From metaphor, I lastly turn to *genius loci*, a notion analogous to the image, but developed primarily in discussions related to design. If image includes everyday, lay-person experiences of the environment, the 'spirit of place' is at home in more specialized discourses. It is applied more reflectedly, involving more interpretation, specification and naming, which may create problems.

To begin with, if 'environmental image' answers to a general idea or overall appearance of an area - which need not be thought of as a place - then it is also related to appropriation. As a result of that process which may halt but is never finished, the image itself is never final. It is open to modifications caused by the ongoing character of appropriation, but also by changes in our world view and values. However, its core consists of experiences and knowledge focused on the area, immediate or mediated - such as presentations of the area in media, everyday discourse, history or fiction. But despite the multiplicity and interdependence of the sources of the overall image, first-hand experience, present or remembered, has a certain priority. If we have direct, on-site experience of certain aspects of an area, our own observations of these may correct our former ideas or ideas put forth by others, while the opposite is less likely to happen. Here one must be cautious, however, and remember that what we observe may be strongly affected by prejudices, hopes or factual misinformation. The environment is behind the image, productively[55], but this does not guarantee its correctness.

Inspired by Henri Bergson and Gilles Deleuze, Bernard Cache discusses image in the context of design and understands it as relevant to perception at large and to all forms of attention. In the widest sense the image is "anything that presents itself to the mind". The idea that images are independent from things is false, "for perception is not an interior image of exterior objects but stands for things themselves. (...) our perceptions are inscribed on the surface of things, as images amongst images."[56] The observation that images do not stand for something else, that they do not represent a thing or reality which can be found independently of or behind the image, is relevant to the environment: that images are inscribed on things implies that they participate in similar transformations as the environment itself, and these transformations constitute their duration and endurance.

Together with the transforming potential of the image comes a stability which differs from static identity. "We believe that certain images can become crystal-clear while never entering into the order of the identical."[57] The clarity of the image belongs with singularity, not identity, and while the image certainly stands out, its suggestions are variable and may be described as "a play of possibilities" or a "potential for variable application"[58]. Images function as nodes in relation to which perception can move. "Vision passes between images as thought passes between concepts."[59] But as the image as such is dynamic, not static, its potential to transform is found not only in the way perception and reflection may move between images, but also in the image itself. It has an ungraspable quality which "is not the obscure or the informal but that which, in the full light of day, can be apprehended only as it is transformed."[60] By understanding image along these lines, we make room for transformations in perception which are parallel to, but should not be thought of as identical to the changes that go on in the environment. Neither are these transformations reducible to our more or less conscious changes of perspective and deliberate interpretations.[61]

Our image of an environment cannot be reduced to one visual image, comparable to a snapshot or picture, although in reflecting on the image we represent it to ourselves as some kind of sensuous image. This is largely due to sedimentation, opacity, remembering, if also forgetting. Here, as Walter Benjamin shows, as important as the sensuous material of remembrance - views, sounds, rhythms or smells - is what we make of these, what they become to us in interpreting, anticipating, imagining[62]. Singular incidents and experiences might have an important role to play in the constitution of the overall image, but they become part of a larger whole which is laden with narrative and values, plans, hopes and fantasies. Together, these constitute the environmental image. The appearance or image of a building, place or area is transformed through repeated, immediate and mediated encounters of subject and environment. These do not form a fragmented series but are continuous in at least two ways. First, there is the continuity of the environment as such, which we know to have existed also during the time which elapsed between our visit today and our last visit. We know that each appearance is bound to a particular perspective and situation and that no appearance is comprehensive. There is also no guarantee that a particular perception is representative, like "there is [no] absolute certitude (...) of any particular thing."[63] This density of the world is a condition of its experienced depth, of the possibility to return to the same spot, although not to the same situation[64]. Second, there is the continuity between our perceptions, which feed back on each other and form a horizon of expectations and a background to present perception. In some cases, as with childhood memories, the relation of memory and place is one of knowledge rather than of immediate recognition: I know this is the place where I spent time as a child, but I do not remember it, or remember it differently[65]. On the other hand, the environment may evoke an unexpected recognition, so that experience seems to be the only recourse to memories which we had otherwise forgotten and which were out of reach for thinking[66]. However, Benjamin suggests that images may have this evocative power, too[67].

In "A Berlin Chronicle", Benjamin explores and unfolds his childhood Berlin in a way that is complementary to the understanding of image developed above and below in this section[68]. Sectors of experience remain wrapped up and inaccessible, parts of the city mute, but this can only be expected in a view of memory as images that "can be unfolded," but where remembrance may always continue into the folds "from small to smallest details (...) while that which it encounters in these microcosms grows ever mightier"[69]. Here as elsewhere in Benjamin's urban reflections the city is portrayed as analogous to the space of memory, which is also, and in a very literal sense, a space of imagination. "Language shows clearly that memory is not an instrument for exploring the past but its theatre. It is the medium of past experiences, as the ground is the medium in which dead cities lie interred."[70]

Both city and memory have to be inhabited, which is an engaging activity, compared to what a mere study of memory or cities can suggest. To inhabit memory is to simultaneously open it up and enlarge it, for memory does not exist independently of the activity of remembrance. That somebody has a large memory or vivid singular memories means that the past is largely accessible to the person. But accessibility is not identical to presence, and to inhabit one's past is possible only if it remains partly in the shadows[71]. On the other hand, some part of the past may also be uninhabitable, and therefore locked up. "I don't remember a thing about the war. While the war was going on, I firmly resolved to forget all that happened, and oddly enough I really don't remember."[72].

If Benjamin describes memory as the medium or theatre of past experiences, he also describes the present as the medium of images[73]. Memory and imagination, considered as mental activities of working with images and exploring them, are so close that one can see them as the same generic kind of activity. The main difference is that whereas we in remembering turn our attention to the past, trying to find out and reach what is there, in imagining

we freely explore the possible meanings of objects of thought, which are of different origin[74]. Imagining is also dependent on past experiences. The store of meanings held by any experienced object, which is accessible in different ways depending on the character of the present experience, is a product of past experiences, of direct and indirect acquaintance with the object.

"Stability and movement are complementary", notes Edward S. Casey[75]. Thus if a picture is not a good point of comparison for the environmental image, the cinematic image may be more illuminating, since it can be expected to preserve experienced temporality. In his studies on film as movement-image and time-image, inspired by Bergson, Deleuze offers such a notion of image. On the other hand, despite movement and change the environmental image, as part of experience, involves identification, thus also objectification and stability to some degree. For something to be an image it must be for someone, in relation to someone, although it is not made by this person alone, and it cannot therefore be completely fluid, without beginning and end[76]. The environment has a stability which distinguishes it from cinema: if the latter can be thought of as narrative and representation of time and space through and through, the environment, as locality and site includes the immobility of locations and the relative permanence of topography and buildings. The environmental image is not unchanging as abstractions or mathematical symbols are but is, rather, a whole that endures while it undergoes change[77].

The environmental image is not identical to the environment, and it is also not of the same status. The environment provides the basis for the image but in a relation which differs somewhat from the one between the real as ground and the world[78]. For the overall environmental image synthesizes our lived reality, reduces its complexity, but without offering a definition. It synthesizes, rather, in the way feeling does. The kind of perception or reflection which is aimed towards all there is to a place - to the overall image - is productive in the sense it finds or, rather, coproduces, the quality that is felt to characterize the place. Such perception or reflection is a kind of imagination, which might be called imaging[79]. It is, like perception, an activity, but as compared to mere recognizing it is more actively and reflectively involved in perceiving *in*. When Mikel Dufrenne observes that "one sees the glass, but one imagines its rigidity or its proper sonority", this instance could be taken as one of imaging[80]. This kind of imagination, where "the sensed reverberates in the sensing" is related to the virtual, to a potential of this world rather than to a fictive universe[81]. Dufrenne also distinguishes the imaginary from the imaginable, where the latter refers to a virtuality of that which is not necessarily or yet articulated into images but may give rise to them. The sea is an example of elements of this kind, so are tonality or coloration. The imaginable can remain impersonal, in latency, but as experienced it works "transsensibly", drawing together our different senses.[82] If the imaginable refers to the flesh of the world, it does not replace the need and existence of images, or an imaginary.

However much the environmental image includes movement, it is not altogether fluid but a medium through which we recognize or think of an environment. The image is not identical to the environment, however bound to its appearances, but exists mentally, as an image of. Therefore, recognition and projection may be understood as modes of framing, as the "determination of (...) a relatively closed system which includes everything which is present in the image"[83]. Include is here a functional concept: the frame holds together what is in the image but does not define it; the frame itself is, rather, the only thing that is defined. That recognition and projection have to do with images, and more particularly with the overall image of an area, does not mean, for example, that in recognizing an area a ready-made image is recognized in it. Identification is based on those specified features which constitute what we may call a frame, but only if we understand it as the general structural backbone of the image. The frame is what keeps the image together but not necessarily by encompassing; it can as well function in the way of a magnet in the image which keeps it together[84]. We may now look afresh at the idea that to identify something - to recognize or project - is to rest content with one's expectations and prejudices. There is some truth to this, particularly if one does not proceed from that stage. But if one understands recognition and projection as modes of framing, and if this understanding accompanies perception, identification need not distort the actual and potential richness of the environment. In addition, recognition and projection are necessary for coping with the environment.

Turning now to the role of depictions or representations of an environment, it can be noted that in some cases, particular pictures or descriptions may importantly influence our approach to an environment and establish its character even prior to personal experience. These visual or verbal descriptions are not perceived as individual pictures which give one perspective on one particular situation, but have a more encompassing role in conducting perception and understanding. In seeing the picture, we should know that it gives us one appearance, but we read a more essential truth into it. The clearest examples are the canonized post card representations of cities, which are not much more than signs or emblems. Take, for example, the image of Paris in the Eiffel tower: a view which has nothing to do with the life of the city. Yet the Eiffel tower does not lie, for the one thing it states is Paris as a space where our memories or dreams can be projected. Other emblems may have a deeper influence on perception, for example the Statue of Liberty outside New York, which is suggestive of the New World, of liberty, of history. Approaching New York with that statue in mind includes certain expectations.[85]

In the emblem, a landmark metonymically represents a city much in the way a market image represents a corporation. This image does not describe what it refers to, and the more widespread it is, the less substantial and defined is it. Depending on the person, the sign may awaken rich associations, but these need not be directly related to what is seen in the picture.

They are similar to the use of place names simply to identify locations, when specific knowledge is not demanded and there is no evocative, emotional and sensuous richness, as that of the memory-images discussed by Benjamin. We typically recognize places we have not visited before through land marks.

Another type of environmental representation are maps, and in general representations which are primarily intended to convey information. Here we may include historical landscape paintings, drawings and photographs. The assumed reliability and objectivity of these representations are due to their status as impersonal representations. They want to suggest not how the land looks to somebody, but how it is. Impersonality turns them into a common, collective enterprise, a shared picture of our land and reality, a geographical self-representation. Impersonality may then become a key feature also of the subject, which is represented as common or shared.

However, if maps are intended to help orientation they cannot be objective: they must be drawn from some perspective, according to some criteria. The orographic map which Cache describes, a map without meaning, directions, centre and boundary, a "design without destiny", a "map without a plan" is the only way to be objective, but it is also an impossibility[86]. In reality, maps may, in different respects, be instruments of power. They influence space consciousness not only by defining a centre, but also by including certain places and omitting others. J.B. Harley observes that maps "tend to 'desocialize' the territory they represent" and thus "foster the notion of a socially empty space"[87]. A representation of territory that looks away from the social reality is not irrelevant for that reality. A representation that aims to be neutral may tone down conflicts and complexities of social reality, but it cannot remove them. There is reason to doubt that an environment can be represented in a way which is objectively and generally correct. The criteria and principles of representation should be declared, as one perspective, open to question. Only then can one seek complementary perspectives, and only if the perspective is known can the correctness of the representation be judged[88].

A more aesthetic or artistic way of influencing our image of a place is the typical or canonical view, for example Giovanni Antonio Canaletto's views of Venice. Such a picture is accepted as typical or representative: it represents what people are prepared and willing to recognize and look for in a particular environment, and it is easy to relate to, since it comes with an atmosphere and a point of view. Art often mediates and colours our perception of environments. This does not mean, only, that the work of art suggests the concrete position we should take in a landscape, or that it makes us look for certain things in a city[89]. A specific way of mediation that is performed by works of art is the suggesting or conveying of an atmosphere, which may be related to such natural elements as light or vegetation, but also to human life. Generally, such mediation constitutes an against which we see, a horizon of expectations; it directs attention but does not command it.

To emphasize the impact of a given image and present it as the normal or natural version of an environment is to reinforce the impact of this image and the legitimacy of the evaluation that accompanies it. The area I live in, in Helsinki, is one of mixed reputation, and to repeat and affirm that reputation is to affirm and reinforce a division of people into us and them. It is significant that such classifications are normally made from outside and against them, it matters little if the inhabitants of the area find it more humane and sympathetic than the more expensive areas of higher status, where inhabitants are often aware of their excellence. The classification from outside, while in fact less knowledgeable, is accompanied by the illusion of the objectivity of not being involved. A description which is accepted as representative or typical is not necessarily anything but established prejudice. However, it importantly influences not just what we perceive, but also from what evaluative angle we perceive it. Frames may in some cases have more to do with evaluation than with interpretation, although the two cannot be dissociated. They may be informative, but also ideologically biased and misleading.

A work of art is openly subjective and personal in a way that distinguishes both the work and its reading from maps and other renderings that aspire to objectivity[92]. When we study a representation of an environment in a work of art, we are aware of being acquainted with a perspective that is subjective and situated, bound to time and place, whether it is a view of London by Joseph Turner, of Berlin by Alfred Döblin or of Venice by Thomas Mann and Luchino Visconti. If our perception of the environment in first-hand experience or "the sensuous image," as Philippe Quéau suggests, "is but a metaphor", we could ask whether the same is not true of the environment as represented in works of art, which typically preserve a sense of the ambiguities and the indefinable of environment?[91] Queau's idea is that perception can only lead us to a partial understanding, for the image as appearance reveals only incompletely its model, which is itself imperceptible and rests behind the image, but is also "the *source* of images"[92]. The environment can be seen as such a model: a model that cannot be copied but models perception.

If the sensuous image is but a metaphor, what kind of metaphor is it? Dufrenne suggests that "the metaphor is always *phora*, change according to place": that it involves a reorganization of perception, even a transposition from one perceptual realm to another[93]. To transpose is not to substitute or exchange; thus, "if metaphorization is a sublimation, it is so in the sense of Adorno: a sublimation that conserves what it exceeds". A key feature of metaphor is here that it involves an openness towards other registers or realms, where the main axis is between metaphorization as 'spiritualization' and the sensuous registers.[94] Could not metaphor, then, in the context of environment and its representations, be understood as a preservation of the phoric, affective, or aesthetic dimension - the realm of becoming, as Glen A. Mazis would say - alongside the cognitive and practical interests of information,

definition, and identification?[95]

According to such an understanding, the work of art which represents an environment is a metaphor through being a sensuous image fixed and made permanent, an articulation of the prearticulated which does not simplify experience but preserves its complexity. The metaphorical dimension of the representation of environment preserves a link to the phoric, which it holds as the contours of our rooms hold the spaces we inhabit. Affectivity is present in any environment and underlines the presence of an experiencing subject. Perhaps there is, in this sense, a metaphorical dimension to any articulation of the experience of place, which is not to say that there is such a dimension in any reference to place, for example in place names. On the other hand, to the extent that we refer to the experience of places rather than merely to geographical locations by the names, affectivity is included and accompanies the experience and even the identification of places. In experience, there is no division of appearance and reality: reflection always lags behind. In reflecting on the environment, we have to rely on memory, for the situation is gone. That may be why we need not just names and labels but metaphorical descriptions as well, which better answer to and evoke the singularity of what was there.

Dufrenne suggests that poetic or aesthetic expression offers bridges from the unsaid to saying and thus mediates feeling and cognition, affectivity and discourse. I shall relate this idea first to names and narratives of places and then, later, to the idea of the *genius loci* as the character of *this* place. Atmosphere links place and subjectivity; affective quality is a ligament which both makes appropriation possible and demands a subject[96].

The apparent function of place names in everyday life is identification where, as noted earlier, the way we understand the name may not be relevant. But as presented in a particular culture or subculture, names are not empty but come with the image of the place which hangs over them as a cloud of atmosphere and character, heavy or light. Even if we have not visited the place, it may resonate strongly. Names and the naming of places are often related to narratives, real or fictive. A street, for example *Union Street*, may commemorate a historical event or, like *Mannerheim Street*, a historical person[97]. These names are familiar from several cities, but in contrast to other widespread street names, such as *Main Street*, the name has no necessary relation to the layout or look of the street, or to the history of the site. Other names are acquired rather than given: they tell of an event that took place on that site, suggest a social function of space, or remind of buildings that once were there. In Paris, *Les Halles* or *Place de la Bastille* name buildings or built areas, but even more strongly they denote locations and history. If we do not know how the buildings look today or how they looked earlier, we may still have some idea of the activities that went on in these buildings: commerce and justice and punishment. These names also exemplify the relation of place names and fiction: the former may evoke images from Emile Zola's novel, whereas with the latter the French Revolution and the destruction of the prison building may have overshadowed the penal function, but in a way that adds to, rather than subtracts from the sublime atrocity of the name. Such place names characterize places in a way that is independent from their direct appearance, but influence our overall perception. There are also names, or nicknames, that are given according to the looks of a building, for example the Sausage House in Helsinki. In ordinary speech, this name can be used without any special reference to the design of the building, as a neutral pointer.

I have suggested that there is, in discourse and in the representation and experience of places, access and interaction between a phoric, a metaphoric and a referential level. An artistic representation of a place, by verbal, visual or auditory means, is in itself an image and at the same time a crystallization of an environmental image in the sense described earlier. It combines concrete experience and abstract analysis, memory and matter, and conveys a world as given in experience, in a situation and inseparable from a certain subjectivity. This subjectivity, with its affective quality, its felt atmosphere gives access to the situation, and through the situation to the place. Individual memories, especially when cultivated into stories and repeated to others or to ourselves, may perform a similar function. They become icons of a place, but also of a world[98]. Once upon a time, when I was a small girl, my family visited Bornholm, an island in the south-eastern part of the Baltic. One day we found a beach we liked very much and when we left it, my mother wondered how we might find it again. My father looked around, at the bus stop, to find a landmark and did so: get off the bus where a man is sitting on a bench. The memory marks that visit and that time, coincidentally and significantly: it is all there. Of course, memory might not be reliable.

The metaphoricity which can be part of descriptions of an environment is manifested in art forms, in collective representations or in individual memory. As affectivity, it belongs to the experience, but includes in addition an articulation, however open, of the felt quality of the place. Rather than direct, the metaphoric is indirect and mediated, and so it is also more dependent on the personality of the experiencing subject. In the affective dimension anonymity prevails, and if the subject is engaged it is as a sensuous being, not as a particular person. But when imagination and metaphor are introduced, the subject is summoned as an experienced and reflective being: imaginatively inhabiting, describing and structuring a world, constructing stories and depictions in and with, rather than from a world. To form even a loose idea of an environment demands some degree of reflection. Therefore, metaphoricity is not there for us, in environmental experience, in the way affectivity is there: we have to attend and call upon ourselves.

If experienced affective or aesthetic quality is approached through art, the risk of getting bogged down with affective categories should not be big, for artistic descriptions of environment draw upon concrete and narrative, situation-bound material, and they also articulate it in this way. They are simultaneously descriptions of environment and experience, and therefore they engage the subject. As descriptions and articulations of experience, they are also irreplaceable.[99] This is what Dufrenne admits in his late book: "The phenomenology of the virtual would be identical to an ontology of the flesh. But that is an impossible ontology ... the unity of the plural cannot be grasped."[100] As connected to virtuality, imaging is processual.

Genius loci, the spirit of place, may be used to loosely suggest that a place has character, but there are also attempts to give it a more precise meaning. This is especially the case in Christian Norberg-Schulz's theory of architecture; but before turning to it, I shall say something general about the theme. The notion of *genius loci* may be seen to function as a node of a place imagination, where everything that is suggested by the place, but not known, is gathered. Sometimes, however, a genius is taken to determine the place, so that while the spirit is still elusive, it has or should have real consequences for management. Such a spirit is claimed to found or belong to the place but is, of course, an interpretive construct. A further problem is that it is often not defined how the genius exists.

To experience the spirit of a place is not something which comes naturally or is necessary there: the genius is a stronger and more specified notion. Therefore, one could say that it belongs with imagination and aesthetically saturated experience. But if that is so, then the interaction of subject and environment, in their particularity, should be relevant, and *genius loci* would not belong to place only, but to situations. The problem with the notion in Norberg-Schulz is his strong emphasis on the givenness of the genius, where there is little room for the change and heterogeneity of environments[101], but also for the subject. The overall emphasis is on identity and stability, so that nature and culture alike appear whole and unchanging, originating, but scarcely developing, if that would include becoming different.[102]

In a fairly recent text Norberg-Schulz declares that it is a human duty to understand and preserve the identity of a place and its *genius loci*, and he adds that preservation, which becomes possible through building or other traditions, is a process: stability is not the opposite of change.[103] Elsewhere, he states that the genius must not be understood as Platonic essence but "in terms of the world it gathers", so that place is seen as "part of living reality." "To respect the *genius loci* does not mean to "freeze" the place and negate history," for *genius loci* is a "'dimension' where life takes place"[104]. Time and experience should be included in the understanding of place and yet, in the description of the features that constitute environmental character concrete, social and political history is scarcely mentioned. For Norberg-Schulz, "[t]he word 'character' indicates an unmistakable totality, or *Gestalt*, where each single part has a relevant function within the whole." Integrity is also implied in environmental character and the qualities through which one can describe it are formal: closure, openness, width, narrowness, sombreness, luminosity, which depend on "plastic modelling, proportion, rhythm, scale, dimension, material texture and colour".[105] In the more recent text environmental character is described as based in "characteristic features and motives" as well as in landmarks[106]. *Genius loci*, in this version, is close to how modernism understood the experience of art: as taking place in a pure present, as a perception of forms that can be performed by any skilled perceiver and where meaning is in essence universally accessible, so that even cultures show their essence on their faces.

Perhaps the emphasis on rootedness in the natural landscape most clearly brings out the lack of social and historical dimensions in Norberg-Schulz. In the book *Genius loci*, he describes the sense of place as produced not only in but by landscape[107]. One does not have to deny the influence of the natural environment on culture to question the idea that landscape determines culture. The stress on unity seems to direct also Norberg-Schulz's thinking about how to deal with the identity of places. Visualization and complementation are the two ways in which the spirit of a place can be enhanced, and the latter is tellingly described: buildings may "add to the environment something which is lacking, whereby the given qualities emerge as such"[108]. But how, one must ask, are the qualities *given* beforehand, and what is their emerging *as such*?

A view rooted only in ideas of culture as cultivation and care for the natural givens of place is not enough if one wants to do justice to real environments; they are much more complex than that. There is a pseudo-concreteness in Norberg-Schulz which makes him, as Adorno said of Heidegger, an a-historical and a-political thinker[109]. Such a position may be legitimate in some contexts, but not if one wants to suggest norms for environmental design and management. There is also a confusion of place and locality, identity and stability, when Norberg-Schulz notes that place secures stability to the life-world "in time and space"[110]. If stability is required not only of localities but also of places, a dialectics of here and there, familiar and strange becomes suppressed. Then a home may indeed become a "museum of the soul"[111].

If reliance on the givens of experience and landscape tends to close the place rather than open it up, a turn towards history may have similar effects. If the concreteness and heterogeneity of history is not recognized, a historical interpretation of *genius loci* may become rationalizing to a point where the life of the "spirit of place" is equally suppressed. It must be noted that such an understanding is not necessary: the notion may include awareness of the complexity of places or areas[112]. The critical and creative potential of the notion lies, rather, in an openness towards the interaction of physical features of the natural and built environment with present human behaviour and experience, but also historical and utopian elements and structures. If any of these is left out, the spirit turns into a static ground, the place into a museum for dead souls.

If imagination utilizes material provided by experience, one might ask whether memory is not, correspondingly, in addition to being a "capacity for endless interpolation into what has been"[113], also productive of extrapolations into what could be? If it is, then it underlines the importance of remembering, on the individual level, and of history, for society, as related not just to knowledge and identity, but to values and choices as well. In emphasizing "the necessary activity of compositional imagination, the thought that produces, corrects, transforms, interprets, and remembers" in architectural design, Vittorio Gregotti points in this direction. He contrasts the interiorized image of imagination, which unfolds and oscillates, thus needing time, to the shallow understanding of image as mere surface or market image.[114] Imagination as an activity, rather than as the "mere recollection of images", can, suggests Gregotti, together with reflection productively enrich experience by providing "new pieces of reality"[115].

It might be advisable to take seriously the metaphorical ascription of living subjectivity to place suggested by *genius loci*. To Rolston, "the 'genius' of the system lies in its fecund creativity. A 'genius' is a power that animates"[116]. The spirit of place, then, is fluent rather than static, for a genius is not an object of knowledge, but a force that influences a place without being perceptible or describable in itself. We can lend an ear to it, but we cannot draw its contours. On the other hand, building projects may respond to the site, even define it, as long as they remain aware of their hypothetical nature, of the fact that "in no case does the identity of a site preexist, for it is always the outcome of a construction"[117]. For building, the site or place needs interpretation, for even its history is not simply given. Therefore, as Gregotti puts it, there is a necessary noncoincidence of any project with its site. "The simple project destroys all neuroses about the future, gives back to the past, to paraphrase Merleau-Ponty, not survival, which is a hypocritical form of oblivion, but a new life that takes the noble form of memory."[118]

More generally, is it not only in so far as we respond to it that a spirit can sensibly be said to exist? In this context, we may recall Casey's statement that the "lived body is the locatory agent of lived places, the subtender of sites, the *genius loci* of all that has come to be called 'space' in the West." Genius is what animates the place, not its detachable features or elements, and although it arises from these, this does not happen as mechanical summation, but in duration and expansion. "Like the congeneric terms *soul* and *feeling*, *spirit* signifies that which refuses to submit to dichotomizing."[119]

Affirmation and transcendence

Merely by existing, the built environment confirms and questions cultural meaning. Material artefacts are permanent and buildings are, in addition, part and parcel of localities, of the fixed points which are the prerequisites of maps and of an ordering of "globally relative" space[120]. Building is affirmative. It never criticizes, only displays. But if buildings are permanent, their meaning is not; material artefacts are used and reused for other than their original purposes. In new contexts, they take on and suggest new meanings. Also the past is elusively suggested and represented by a building rather than told; it is stated without words, as uncharacterized existence. Further, a project may suggest a world that does not yet exist, as have utopian plans and buildings.

Affirmation and transcendence of meaning are, in the built environment, interdependent. It is in their materiality, because they have endured, that buildings, as all authentic documents, are privileged messengers from the past, as compared to immaterial tradition and mediated knowledge. The building was here then, and it is here now. The endurance of the artefact and the elusiveness of its meaning are two sides of one coin. But it is not simply the case that the building is here, while its former meaning has evaporated or is hidden. Its former meaning is *in* the building, which therefore affirms not only present use and the contemporary context, but also former intentions and practices. Affirmation and transcendence are intertwined: the environment affirms while it transcends, affirms by transcending. Transcending, it transforms what is and affirms the actualized possibilities: what is suggested, is *here*.

Affirmation and transcendence are intertwined, but point in different directions. Affirmation, particularly as related to building projects, is more closely related to society, in both the social and the political dimension. Architecture represents the prevailing order, which may be or include disorder. Transcendence, on the other hand, is in experience typically linked to existential issues. It reminds us of metaphysical or cosmological questions related to the world as universe or totality, to nature, God and human finitude. It is for this reason that it can question power so radically; through being other, not just different or opposite, it gets around and beyond the choices presented and implied by any structure of power. Thus to point to affirmation and transcendence as aspects of the built environment is not to point to separate realms or realms that should be kept separate. Rather, the contrary: only together can they support the necessary, dynamic balance of existence.

In the following, I first put the emphasis on affirmation and discuss some aspects of the meanings which are presented and articulated in buildings. In institutional function and identity affirmation prevails, but neither is unchanging, and transcendence is therefore not absent from them. In the experience of time - past, present, future, or utopia as the not-here - the emphasis is on transcendence. In connection with these themes, it is worthwhile to keep an eye on the relative weight of epistemological and ontological questions in the experience of environmental meaning. One could think that when something is affirmed, both existence and essence are stated. But it is not always so: when a building affirms time as past, it does not specify the character of that past. Transcendence, on the other hand, has direction rather than a specified content. To transcend is to go beyond, but is a statement neither of existence nor essence. Transcendence suggests that there is more than what is before our eyes, and so questions the sovereignty of the given, but leaves the alternatives open. It stirs a response which must articulate itself, be responsible. To be efficient, it must not be too specific.

By giving shape and existence to the institutional function it serves a building affirms it. It represents, articulates and manifests the presence of an institution directly, but indirectly it also represents larger structures of social organization. A school is part of a system of education. The foundation of the prison or court house is the law. A private house may represent the life style of a certain class. This form of representation is affirmative because the buildings maintain the institutions they serve; the latter are not just presented through the buildings, but also exist in and through them. To take place, social life needs particular spaces. In this, the fundamental political significance of buildings is rooted: the *what* is, after all, prior to the *how*.

The institution is affirmed by the building as a such-and-such: hierachical, pompous, ordinary, classical. There is an interaction between the building's appearance and the institution: our image of the latter is dependent on the former, but our characterization of the former also depends on the latter. What is appropriate for a library may not be appropriate for a garage, and vice versa. But if buildings are perceived as such-and-such, there are complications in the everyday context when we do not know what social purpose a building serves. Our framing might be mistaken and only later, if at all, adjusted. Also, we will not necessarily abandon our misunderstanding when the facts are corrected. If the library looked like a garage, its appearance will not simply change into a library when we are informed of its actual function but, rather, into a garage-like library. While information changes our understanding, the earlier perception does not disappear, but is integrated in the new one, and it is the appropriateness of this new appearance that is judged. If a school-like building turns out to be a dwelling, the activity of dwelling is tested imaginatively against the given totality of functional and representative features. To take another example of misconstruing the function of buildings: we may remember buildings from our childhood that we imagined to have certain functions and that therefore played a role in our lives. Even if the imagined functions do not correspond to the real functions of the buildings, a later correction cannot cancel or annul the role performed by the building in our life. Representational and stylistic elements, associations and suggestions are, when part of an environment, both effective and in a certain sense real[121] .

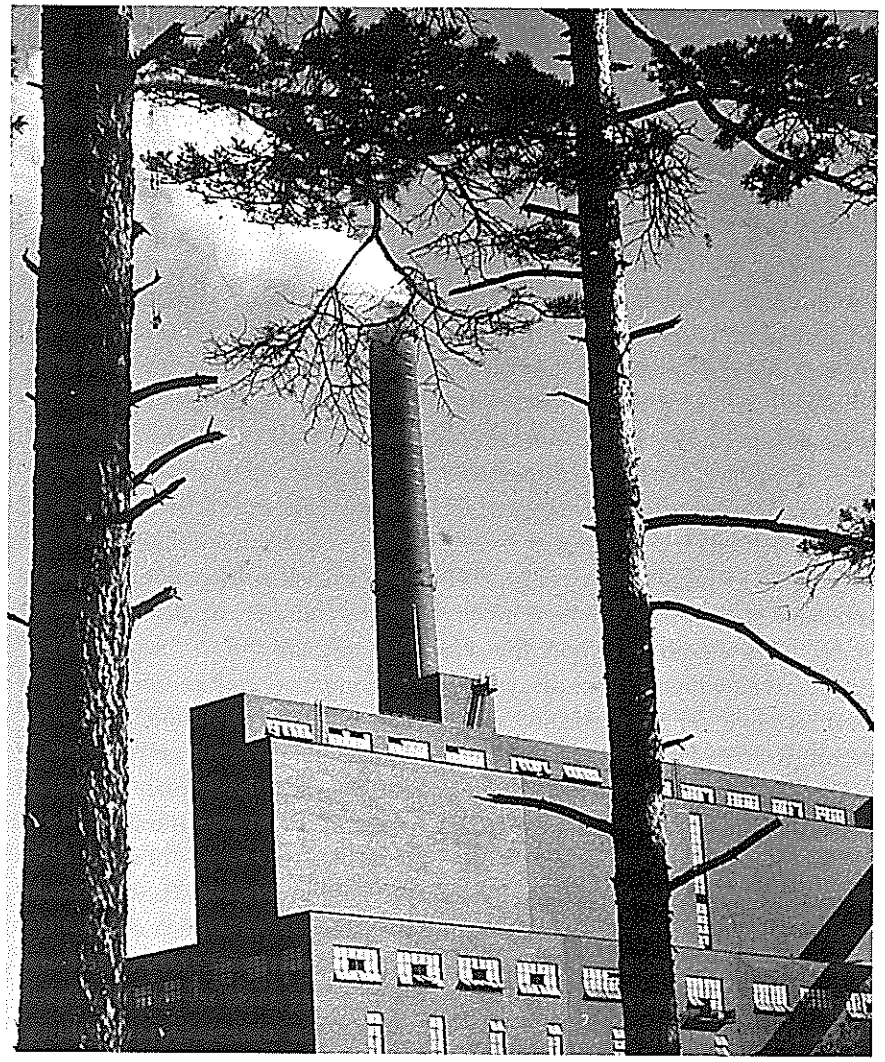
The function of a building is important for its experienced identity which is, as the previous example suggests, a social determination. Identity, here, refers to the dominant frame, through which we see the building and name it. Its more precise construction may vary between individuals and is hypothetical in character: it can be added to and adjusted - still it represents whatever the building stands for. Through this presupposition - that whatever is, is there - the presupposed and basic identity is given and always affirmed. Areas or places are similar to the world as totality: different perspectives, narratives and interpretations do not cancel each other even when they cannot be included in one picture. The geographical stability of locality gives room to a host of stories and events, and the relative neutrality of built space in relation to events makes the idea applicable to building, too. Therefore, if new information is added or if incorrect views are corrected, our understanding, not the area or building, changes.

On the other hand, even if we can talk about the identity of an area in the sense of a presupposed totality, we must admit that perceived identity is only a part of and a perspective on the presupposed whole individuality. A building exists in society and is maintained and grounded both in such immaterial structures as beliefs and practices and in the material structures of cities and landscapes. At any present moment, the experienced character of a building or place is relative to the practices performed by dwellers and users. This is evident also from the understanding of history when we ask how this building was used before.

Most built environments are public and all built environments are social, but the degree to which a single experiencer has a share in a particular environment varies. There are different degrees and modes of belonging, based on different relations to an environment. As I argued earlier, habitation is the basic mode of appropriation. Further, the area I inhabit is the area where I belong in an unrejectable way, irrespective of my likes and dislikes, dreams and longings. That my environment defines me may be a reason to change my lodgings, if they does not answer to my ideals. Note that there are two different but not exclusive senses involved in feeling at home and being at home. We may feel at home in an area that awakens memories or associations to a familiar way of life or to ideals of ours, even if we do not know the area well. It affirms our desires. Our actual home may not, on the other hand, affirm what we want to be.

In belonging, both knowledge and values are involved and influence each other. If we move on our own through an area we do not know, we are probably attentive to our route and seek information. Further, aware of ourselves and our status as strangers, we are also aware of those others whose world we do not share. But this varies according to our attitude, and its influence becomes even clearer if we are transported through the area: a visitor may look away or perceive only in order to affirm his preconceptions, or he may look attentively, trying to be open to what the area is, as opposed to what he was told. If the visitor belongs to the culture or subculture that lives in the area, his perception of it may be richer and more knowledgeable - involving both affirmation of expected patterns and deviations from them - even as absentminded.

In addition to the individual's cultural background, the accessibility of buildings is relevant to how we relate to them and they to us, also in terms of affirmation[122]. Accessibility, dependent on functions, status and the perceiver's knowledge, as much as on the location of a building or area, makes visible the other side of affirmation - its dark side - namely denial and exclusion. In affirming the present, the environment affirms a form of life. It may thereby deny, by exclusion, those who do not belong. For example, the wealth and well-being communicated by certain housing areas



utopia, Alvar Aalto, Sunila paper mill, MFA, photo T. Kanerva supports those who have or think they may have a share in it - whether they live there or not - but not the others.

If a person has memories of an area, the area affirms and maintains the identity of that person. But to have experiences of an area or type of area also means that that area, or an area of that kind, appears as richer in affordances. To know what one can do here is often based on familiarity and on past experiences. The perceived richness and depth of the area, based in the concrete time of events, becomes part of the area's overall appearance, and informs aesthetic judgement. In the hypothetical but possible example of a poorer and low-status housing area where the material conditions of life are not as good as somewhere else, a stranger perceives lack of space and lack of conveniences, but for those who grew up there, lack is not the primary characteristic of the area, although they may be well aware of it[123]. The childhood environment is full of socially and personally meaningful elements, including imaginatively engaging spaces and details. A theoretical knowledge of the cultural ecology of an area may guarantee that our approach is not totally misdirected, but without inclusion of immediate, or mediated, concrete, personal experience, it does not take us very deep into the place.

Urban space is heterogeneous particularly in its social dimension. The city which appears on the map contains innumerable and differently centred experienced cities belonging to individuals who have inhabited or visited the city and where the centres depend on experiences and knowledge, values and interests, so that, although multiple, the versions of the city are not random[124]. We should remember the possibility to share and to change perspectives, which is a condition for all communication. Not only is the world we live in heterogeneous; heterogeneity is also a condition for our relations to it[125]. Heterogeneity and plurality may be more or less perceptible in an environment. As an alternative to neatness and unified planning, there is the possibility of perceiving a socially unplanned aspect of human life as it has taken its course, sometimes against and typically ignorant of the intentions of authorities and planners. Without trying to decide its positive or negative value here, we may note that it is a factor which, much as the different strategies for reuse of buildings, may increase or decrease plurality, affirming either individuality or social unity.

That the built environment affirms the functions and the history it represents does not mean, then, that these could be comprehensively described. What is presented is undeniably there, but when asked what it is, the answer is all but clear. Social function arises in the unplanned, if also in society. The environment seems to transcend any one answer. On the other hand, as Alfred Schutz argues, because the world in which we find ourselves transcends our own finite existence, we use signs and symbols in order "to come to terms with [the] manifold experiences of transcendancy"[126].

To build is to frame and to fix existence, but because of the persistence of built structures, they transcend individual human existence and even collective human knowledge. However, to the extent that the transcendence of

buildings is abstract and symbolic, it can be controlled by individual intention: the unchanging built structure would eternally testify to its builder. If a building could be eternal, if it could be an ideal object in the way mathematical symbols or musical scores are, it would transcend the workings of time. But the transcendence of the environment is for the most part different: it is the transcendence of the unfolding of concrete time, of movement and change over and against any fabricated structure, individual human being or political community. Sooner or later, everything is swallowed by time and all the time we are changing, becoming different, on the way to new constellations where our personal being at some point ceases to exist. Inevitably, in building against time, we build in time.

Time transcends any built object or project while building, at the same time, makes time perceptible as history. Monuments stand as reminders of a cultural past which we have no other way of direct access to, and although material objects are mute, they testify to the past's existence. What monuments and old buildings in general do for the shared past, the concrete scenes of our lives do for personal meaning: proof that it once was; that our past is located in this world. Still, if the past is somehow here, it is here without form, here in the way of the proximate, not the present. When a monument marks a moment of time, it shows the distance between that moment and the present moment, a distance of which nothing is said and which appears as a leap, particularly if the surroundings are of more recent origin. The past cannot be preserved; what is preserved is at most an image, but as we often do not know what we should recognize, it awakens wonder or probing imagination.

Only where movement is first interrupted can anything be conserved. Conservation, and especially building conservation, is done against time and change; it is a project of the present which marks and musealizes, fixes and affirms a chosen moment, however layered. But in an everyday and absent-minded experience of a historical environment, knowledge may be of little importance. Walking through ancient streets, we are present to more than knowledge, as bodies as much as minds, subjected to buildings and space, with feet against the ground, with smells and sounds for our noses and ears. In these experiences, however historical the environment is, it appears as time in a way which is close to the continuous, unordered unfolding of natural time. A past in general, without dates, is suggested, a memory which whispers in a voice so low that we do not hear what it says[127].

History may be experienced as the basis and fundament of what a society is, its *terra firma*. Affirmation looks back at defined moments and events. Natural time is presented differently, as an unfolding process and traces left in a process. Even geological traces, such as patterns in stone, appear as marks of a process that went forward and is, somehow still, without beginning and end. Natural time and natural phenomena are, as they are exterior to human will, mere surrounding, folding phenomena, givens. Weathering and ruination suggest continuity, even when the workmanship and design, the cultural intentions that originally went into the building, are distant and gone. The original moment of building may therefore, paradoxically, be most directly present in decay, when nothing else is left of the building's life.

While one might see the writing of history and the conservation of buildings as ways to transcend the present, they in fact extend rather than transcend it, tame and control time rather than include it. But if we take heed of building as a process with ongoing construction and change, the transcendence and openness of time past is included in the building, even if it is considered only as a cultural artefact, for the process includes heterogeneous and competing intentions rather than finished, unified objects. According to this approach, the building's artefactuality, which is now multiple and plural, may generate correct or mistaken guesses and narratives about the building, such that the past can be imaginatively inhabited by us. The already populated past of historical research does not offer such possibilities. Temporal transcendence of the cultural present is, not surprisingly, easier in vernacular, fairly anonymous or unidentified environments than in highly symbolic, identified and conserved buildings, where the past's intentions are presented as if they were contemporary, but the traces of the past are eradicated[128]. In such cases, affirmation kills transcendence.

In addition to the past, there is in the built environment a temporal transcendence towards the future. The object that has persisted persists, so that in an unspecified future some buildings shall probably constitute the most direct links to our present, which is by then past. As enduring and changing, the building, and even more so the built environment, points forwards. If the building, as a cultural entity in the present, is a synthesis of activities on it and activities in and around it, its identity should be seen as an unfolding narrative. The future is open and radically out of reach of present knowledge[129]. Indeed, it is change rather than persistence as such that forms the basis for the transcendence of buildings towards the future, for if they just remained, they would extend the present into the future rather than transcend the present.

As an unknowable dimension, the future is more like nature than history, for our ignorance of history is importantly caused by forgetfulness, lack and insufficiency of documentation. The future is known only when it is no longer future; at present it is outside the reach of any human intentionality; it can, as nature, be influenced, but not ruled. The future is included in experience as an open dimension towards which we go - whatever direction we choose - but is not an object of knowledge, and neither is it perceptibly present in an objectifiable way. But in our perceptions of the environment, there may nevertheless be qualities and features which suggest, to our minds, the future dimension and the coming of different times. For this reason, through the principle of hope, the future dimension is ethically significant. It does not define ideals, but indicates that life is worthwhile, that existence makes a difference.

Our views on what a place will be is a central ingredient in the overall judgement of the place. A well preserved historical environment may look very nice and still not attract those who feel that development is here closed and sealed, that there is no future in this place, only the preservation of what once was. In other environments, where construction goes on or children play in the streets, there is a vitality which suggests that the place and its people are full of life, so that although something is lacking, there is a promise of more to come. The present is full and spills over constantly, tomorrow is not the same as yesterday. This makes the environment exciting. Life - the perception of living things and activities, or their traces - is therefore relevant for the actualization of a future dimension in our experience of environment. We are not always able to decide whether particular things indicate vitality or neglect: scattered tools may point either way, and in such cases our understanding is influenced by contextual cues and our own experience. Characterizations such as stasis, vitality, ongoing work, disorder, neglect, deterioration and diligence are not additional features, but constitutive of the environmental image.

But if the future is out of reach of what we now know, what should we think of the utopian elements of architecture? As perceived, these typically permeate the project. The whiteness of early modern housing areas represents a vision of better living, of a healthy and good life in the near future. Utopia characterizes all architecture which embodies, displays or suggests a better or a different world and society[130]. Seen in this way, utopianism is often, not always, part of architecture. It may utilize elements of the past, but transposes them into the future by suggesting them for us. Utopianism in architecture is visionary, but not only that, since it also realizes. Its regulative force and exemplary efficiency is, however, dependent on being different from the surrounding buildings and from society. It is because utopia is not here that it may draw us in a certain direction. The moment we perceive the utopian building as part of our world as it is, it becomes affirmative and loses a potential for transcendence. But as long as we lend an ear to Louis Kahn's question of "what the building wants to be"[131] or reflect upon it as a foundation of a human world, we remain open to the fact that things are, were and could be different. Such questions are aesthetically and hermeneutically activating, but not paths where at the end a correct answer is waiting. In utopian interpretation, says Richard Kearney, "value is in front of the symbol, not behind it".[132]

Sometimes we would hesitate to call a whole building or area utopian, even if individual elements seem to point towards another life, different from the present or from the past. Such elements do not propose or indicate the existence of a unified utopian alternative but work negatively, suggesting that there are other possibilities than the *status quo*. They represent the general possibility of things being otherwise but do not state how things would be in such a case. Besides utopia proper, which tends to speak with a certain seriousness, there is thus fantasy and play which disrupt the monologue of unified environments and may afford material for a dialogical, even hermeneutical imagination[133].

The multiplicity and elusiveness of the various dimensions of transcendence, finally, bring us back to the present. This is not, however, the pregiven and predefined present of affirmation, where we are supposed to obey and to follow, but the manifold presence which is layered and continuously developing and which forces us to choose. The environment offers meaning, it does not give it to us; meaning is not handed over in neat parcels but maintained and transformed in the practices of inhabiting and reflecting upon the environment.

Culture is constantly subject to change, and building - the objects and the activity - is doubly influenced by these changes, since it is part both of the material context of the natural and built environment, and of the immaterial social and cultural contexts. What is actually perceived in the built environment is dependent on unreflected practices of dwelling, and of traditions and ideas, which suggest what we should attend to. Some of the meanings embodied in buildings remain unactualized possibilities, and for this reason there is a real distinction between the meanings of the built environment and meanings at work in the environment at a particular moment. Potentially meaningful elements may become virtually nonexistent if no attention is paid to them over a longer time. Thus although a building's past is in principle part of its present, it is also subservient to it. There is a primacy of the present, an experienced present which is open to the past and to the future[134].

Notes

[1] Merleau-Ponty 1996/1946, 49.

[2] See chapter one, second section.

[3] Dufrenne 1992/1953, 647; compare Heidegger 1971/1959, 51; also Sallis 1995, 39-48 and 1994, or McWhorter 1992b.

[4] On the difference between mute and senseless, compare Cataldi 1993, 128.

[5] Kristeva 1985/1974, 22-30.

[6] See Lingis 1996 and Sartwell 1996.

[7] According to Veikko Anttonen, the sacred (*pyhä*) has in Finland been used in names of places at the limit between the proper and the alien, culture and its other; Anttonen 1994, 26-31.

[8] I soon return to this question through comparisons of knowledge versus experience and a paradigmatic versus a syntagmatic dimension of environmental perception.

[9] This play on words comes out better in French, where *vers* means 'towards'.

[10] Benjamin 1997, 81.

[11] Merleau-Ponty 1992/1945, 374.

[12] Compare Böhme 1995, i.e. 21-48 and 177-190.

[13] This understanding of infinity is inspired by Levinas, compare chapter one, fourth section.

[14] Merleau-Ponty, quoted in Levinas 1993, 100.

[15] Compare also the general idea that "we belong to [the land], and not it to us", expressed in Casey 1993, 264.

[16] For a discussion on these lines, see Haapala, forthcoming.

[17] There are also cases where the object is not strange to us but where the context tells us that it is meant for interpretation, analysis and discussion: for example art, religion or important political speeches. See also chapter three, first section, above.

[18] See Tuan 1974, 10-11, or Casey 1993, 260.

[19] Kinaesthesis refers to the awareness of the movements of one's body; Husserl 1997/1970, 106-107, 217. Gibson points out that there is no sense of kinaesthesis; Gibson 1966, 111.

[20] Waldenfels 1994, 63, points out the passivizing effect of being transported.

[21] Compare Descartes' idea of vision as touch; Merleau-Ponty 1993/1964, 37; also Vasseleu 1998, 41-59. Transferred to the car, this means that we may feel the ground against the tyres. However, environmental sensitivity and even place sensitivity is not necessarily impeded by vehicles, as is shown by the Puluwat method of navigation, where the body feels the marine location through the vessel; Casey 1993, 27-28.

[22] Deleuze 1994/1966 or 1986, 1-11.

[23] Compare, on sauntering, Thoreau 1950, i.e. 597-602.

[24] Perhaps this illuminates the felt violence and artificiality of the Berlin wall. These characteristics would then be due not only to political and cultural factors, which are not to be denied.

[25] Compare the deictic aspect of *Dasein* (presence, being here), which has recently been translated into Finnish as *paikallaoleminen*, meaning being in place or being here; Haapala 1998. This is close to implacement as understood by Casey 1993, 3-21.

[26] Merleau-Ponty 1991/1964; see also chapter one, third section.

[27] Compare Casey 1993, 22-39.

[28] William Ittelson, quoted in Bonnes and Secchiaroli 1995, 135.

[29] Compare Welsch 1996, 260-288 (in English 1997, 134-149).

[30] This point is emphasized by Casey 1993, i.e., xiii, 13.

[31] On territory, see Bonnes and Secchiaroli 1995, 87-93.

[32] Bonnes and Secchiaroli 1995, 93.

[33] Benjamin 1997, 49.

[34] Benjamin 1997, 69.

[35] Kearney points out that as *Ereignis*, Being is understood as becoming and possibilizing which implies "letting things be what they can be"; Kearney 1995, 47, also 46-49.

[36] Heidegger 1971/1959, 196, 258; compare Heidegger 1982/1971, 90, 127.

[37] Compare the notes in Heidegger 1982/1971, 128, 129.

[38] Heidegger 1971/1959, 267; compare Heidegger 1982/1971, 135 (italics in the text).

[39] Given the emphasis on the temporality of existence in Heidegger, this may not contradict what he says, but he does not discuss this dimension. For an essentialist application of Heidegger to architectural theory, see the works of Norberg-Schulz, criticized by Bengtsson 1994. Karsten Harries' interpretation is far more sophisticated; Harries 1997.

[40] Heidegger 1972, 30-32.

[41] On 'here' and 'there', see Heidegger 1949/1927, 102-110 (par. 22 and 23) or 1954, 158-159, or Casey 1993, 50-56.

[42] Casey, in emphasizing the importance of place, tends to give so much attention to the body that the whatness of the place almost becomes irrelevant: "*place is where the body is*", Casey 1993, 103 (italics given).

[43] The most interesting discussion is in "Bauen Wohnen Denken" but the opening passages of "Die Sprache im Gedicht" are also relevant; Heidegger 1954, 145-162 and Heidegger 1971/1959, 37-82; compare Casey 1993, 176-177. A complication, related to Heidegger's vocabulary and the differences between German and English, should be noticed. It is impossible to find precise equivalents to the terms he uses, so I shall try to make sense of what he suggests in other ways. The terminological difficulties, which do not go away, shall be commented upon when needed.

[44] Heidegger 1954, 152-3.

[45] Heidegger 1954, 153.

[46] Heidegger 1954, 154

[47] Heidegger 1982/1971, 159. Compare Ricoeur's suggestion that since "what is 'made one's own'" is "the project of a world" appropriation "implies a moment of dispossession of the egoistic and narcissistic ego"; Ricoeur 1976, 94.

[48] I leave to the side the abstracting tendency: Rossi's dissociation of the locus from "the real city" when he instead emphasizes its relevance in the human activity of construction; compare Eisenman 1989/1982, 8.

[49] Rossi 1989/1982, 107, 103, compare 21.

[50] Compare Gregotti 1996, also the discussion in the next section.

[51] Rossi 1989/1982, 106.

[52] Heidegger 1954, 155-6, 158. Space here should not be confused with abstract or universal space.

[53] On research on place in environmental psychology, see Bonnes and Secchiaroli 1995, 129-130, 161-174.

[54] The prejudice is that we speak loudly in trams.

[55] Compare Norberg-Schulz 1975, 432: "Whereas 'existential space' denotes the environmental *image*, 'architecture' comprises the concrete *forms* which determine or result from this image." Compared to Lynch, my understanding of 'environmental image' is less concrete; Lynch 1968/1960, 46-90.

[56] Compare Deleuze 1986, 59, 61.

[57] Cache 1995, 3, compare 140. This echoes Bergson's idea that "the set of images (...) is consciousness", quoted in Deleuze 1986, 61.

[58] Cache 1995, 16.

[59] Cache 1995, 112. Here he discusses "genuinely primary" images.

[60] Cache, 106. Compare the translators' (Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam) characterization in Deleuze, 1986, xi: "Concepts are the images of thought."

[61] Cache 1995, 39; compare 153: the image-monument, or the modern monument "ensures the transistance from one reading to another".

[62] It can be noticed that Cache's discussion of the image is rather formal; he describes it in spatial, plastic and geometric terms and does not pay much attention to the historical and functional, narrative content of environments. This is not to say that these have no place in his approach. Political and social history is included in his "formalist history" of Lausanne; Cache 1995, 6-14. The approach is also in a characteristic way that of a designer: although the movement of the image is emphasized, it is situated in the world - where also things are images; Cache 1995, 29-30.

[63] See, for example, Benjamin 1997, 293-346.

[64] Merleau-Ponty 1992/1945, 344.

[65] On depth, see Cataldi 1993, 7-85.

[66] Compare Benjamin 1997, 337.

[67] The classical locus of this idea is the Madeleine cake in Marcel Proust's *A la recherche du temps perdu*, first part, *Du côté de chez Swann*.

[68] Benjamin 1997, 345-6.

[69] This is no coincidence: Bergson's work influenced Proust and was topical at the time Benjamin wrote his texts on cities, in which personal experience, memory and image are related. Besides the "Berlin Chronicle", relevant texts include "One-Way Street", "Naples", "Moscow", "Marseilles" and "Hashish in Marseilles"; Benjamin 1997, 45-104, 167-222. There is also the unfinished Arcades project or *Passagenwerk*, which deals with Paris in the nineteenth century.

[70] Benjamin 1997, 296 and, on inaccessibility, 337, 345-346.

[71] Benjamin 1997, 314.

[72] Dufrenne 1991, 195.

[73] Armando 1996, 27, quoting an anonymous woman in Berlin.

[74] Benjamin 1997, 300.

[75] To *reach* the past points to an attempt, such as Proust's, to not just abstractly know what happened, but to bring back its feeling and quality. Memory is not just a mental activity: only if we accept the dichotomy of mental versus somatic does the former rule out the latter. Compare, on imagination, chapter two, second section, third subsection.

[76] Casey 1993, 286.

[77] I find the idea of "images in themselves" that "do not appear to anyone" questionable; Deleuze 1986, 60.

[78] Compare *stabilitas loci* in Casey 1993, 286.

[79] Deleuze 1986, 9-11.

[80] Compare the first section of the present chapter.

[81] Compare Boyer 1994, 137, *passim*.

[82] Dufrenne 1991, 122.

[83] Dufrenne 1991, 124, also 123-125, 161, 191. Dufrenne deals primarily with the relations of the senses and synaesthesia, but his argument is more generally relevant to the evocative power of objects.

[84] Dufrenne 1991, 198-199, also 193-200.

[85] Deleuze 1986, 12; compare Cache, 55-65.

[86] Compare the notion of local space, which starts in some element; Deleuze 1986, 186-187.

[87] It may be added that today film is a more important medium in shaping our images of foreign cities than built structures as such.

[88] Cache 1995, 18. Even an orographic map presupposes decisions and choices: the scale of the map is, for example, not simply given.

[89] Harley 1989/1988, 290, 292, 284 and 303.

[90] Compare Robert Stecker's discussion of Carlson's attempts to specify criteria for the correct aesthetic appreciation of nature; Stecker 1997.

[91] Compare Sepänmaa 1994, who perhaps overemphasizes the impact of art on the perception of environments.

[93] This is true of the Romantic and modern conception of art, which is still with us. Even if older paintings did not aspire to individuality but to generality, the artist's point of view is mostly apparent and empirical also in them.

[94] Quéau 1993, 176. The sensuous image is contrasted with the intelligible image, which is an analogy.

[95] Quéau 1993, 179, 175-182.

[96] Dufrenne 1991, 44, referring to Paul Ricoeur, *La métaphore vive*, 297.

[97] Dufrenne 1991, 46, 51, 55.

[98] Compare Andrea Nye's characterization of Hannah Arendt: "the necessary metaphorical nature of thought has reference to thought's source in experience", Nye 1994, 260 note 41; compare 209.

[99] Dufrenne 1967, 53-61.

[100] Both these street names are found in downtown Helsinki.

[101] World in the sense referred to above in chapter one, first section; compare Deleuze 1986, 122-124 on an "originary world" which is immanent in a real environment and from which a "determined milieu" derives.

[102] Even if affective categories would exist they would perhaps found, but not equal experience; compare the discussion in chapter four, first section.

[103] Dufrenne 1991, 200.

[104] Compare Bengtsson 1994, 29-30.

[105] This criticism may appear unjust, taken that Norberg-Schulz puts a stress on processes. But his historicity is similar to Heidegger's, by whom he is inspired: it is general rather than concrete and particular.

[106] Norberg-Schulz 1994, 15.

[107] Norberg-Schulz 1980, 27.

[108] Norberg-Schulz 1975, 432.

[109] Norberg-Schulz 1994, 11.

[110] Norberg-Schulz 1980. In yet another text, Norberg-Schulz exemplifies the regional character of the Finnish landscape by mentioning the influence of the epic *Kalevala* on the architect Eliel Saarinen. Taken that both national romanticism as a style of Finnish architecture and the epic *Kalevala* are constructions on the basis of fragmented materials, this is a counter-example rather than an example of given regional rootedness, even if regional character need "not relate to natural characters but rather to a particular building tradition"; Norberg-Schulz 1988, 141, 149.

[111] Norberg-Schulz 1988, 135; compare 139: "Thus architecture visualizes and complements the spatial properties of the natural place."

[112] Dallmayr 1991, 55; compare Lacoue-Labarthe's observation that political to Heidegger means historical; Lacoue-Labarthe 1990, 18.

[113] Norberg-Schulz 1994, 7.

[114] Norberg-Schulz 1994, 11, where this expression is used positively.

[115] Compare Casey 1993, 303, 314.

[116] Benjamin 1997, 305.

[117] Gregotti 1996, 99. Compare his description of the architectural project as a task which includes a "critique of the present and of the horizon of its reorganization," 21, also 9-10, 21-28. Gregotti borrows the idea of the interiorized image from Peter Handke; compare Handke 1987, 29-30.

[118] Gregotti 1996, 100.

[119] Rolston 1994, 223.

[120] Cache 1995, 15.

[121] Gregotti 1996, 70, 87.

[122] Casey 1993, 105, 314.

[123] Deleuze and Guattari 1994/1980, 474.

[124] According to the "Thomas theorem", named after William Isaac Thomas: "If men define situations as real, they are real in their consequences." Schutz 1982/1962, 348.

[125] On accessibility, compare Schutz 1982/1962, 134-135.

[126] Compare, on the "loathing for the suburbs", Chemetov 1996, 31-45.

[127] On social reality as constituted by "associates", "contemporaries", "predecessors" and "successors", see Schutz 1982/1962, 134.

[128] Compare Schutz 1982/1962, 53.

[129] Schutz 1982/1962, 293.

[130] Compare Deleuze 1989, 51, 55, 79.

[131] The supposed intentions are typically interpretive constructions, but that does not change their influence.

[132] This is what makes time ethically significant; compare Levinas 1996/1948.

[133] On the utopian function of architecture and art, see Bloch 1989, Lotman 1987; on *eutopia* as good or ideal place, Finley 1987, 178. Kearney suggests that God could be understood "not as a *topos* of being but as a *utopos* other than being"; Kearney 1995, 61.

[134] Also Frampton, 1985, 244, refers to this famous question, which I have not been able to locate.

[135] Kearney 1995, 75.

[136] See Kearney, as noted in chapter one, note 198.

[137] Compare Deleuze's description of an event; Deleuze 1989, 100.

PART THREE

AXIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES

> *It is only as dwellers among the objects of the world that we come to have the value-experiences we do have, for those experiences are object-directed (...) Yet the values we find in the objects are no less dependent on the beings we are ourselves*[1]

Throughout this work, the relation of individual experience to public space and structures of meaning has been a central concern. The question of how the always already of the built environment, its material and cultural reality and complex of meanings, are taken in and carried on by the individual, appropriated and transformed, also guides this final part. Nowhere is the inseparability of world and human subject more apparent than when we focus on value. If some messages survive in objects even while they are known by nobody - as in the sealed tombs of the pyramids - a value is a value only if it is held by someone.

However, that value is relational does not mean that there must at every moment be a subject who attends to, experiences or actualizes what is valued. What it means, minimally, is that value exists in a context or system.[2] One says that an object is of value: value belongs to the object, it is not projected onto it. Further, that value is relational does not imply that evaluation is without grounds. Each individual finds himself in a cultural situation which is historical through and through, a history "which is ourselves with our roots, our proper growth and the fruits of our work"[3] . Whatever we think and work with is, in one way or another, given or suggested to us through the environment, not invented. We do not create ourselves from nothing, but from concrete situations where some elements are noticed by us and others not, although they may still be influential. On the other hand, we never grasp the world as it is by itself, for we are included in it, grasping[4] .

The axiological perspective is at home in the movement of reflectively turning towards the world and thereby beyond the conceptually given. As we here deal with the engagement of particular subjects in particular situations, judgement is aesthetic rather than determinate[5] . It seems indeed that aesthetic value in particular cannot be understood apart from an experiencer and an act of appreciation. To know that the object exists may add to its aesthetic value, but mere knowledge of the existence of something cannot give rise to aesthetic appreciation[6]. Object and experiencer must be present to each other.

Evidently, there are different ways to speak of value and it seems that they differ in a way which is similar to the distinction between 'meaning' and 'sense' described earlier. Values are named and articulated, but there is also a dimension of value in human life, a valuing that shows in behaviour while it may not be explicitly declared. I shall start with the latter kind, then turn to the former and to some reflections on value in relation to the built enviroment.

We value some things without being able to explain why in precise terms or to name particular reasons. For example, we feel a love or a desire that cannot be satisfied but is directed towards something, an inexhaustible tenderness which affects all our being and doing. To value, in this sense, is to be in a vividly felt relation and at the same time to cherish and guard. In a similar way, we may disvalue, withdraw, avoid, perhaps even attack what we for one reason or another dislike.

While valuing, which guides our actions and shows in our behaviour, may be felt but not reflected upon, this does not mean that it is irrational or without grounds. It may arise similarly to aesthetic judgement or an understanding of atmosphere: synthetically, but including various aspects and concerns. It may be importantly based in knowledge which becomes integrated in our valuing attitude towards, for example, agents in the sphere of economic or political decision-making.

In a sense, valuing is the reality of value, its efficient, influential side. The other side is the articulation of values which, deplorably, sometimes is another thing altogether. We hold and declare values such as freedom, democracy, justice, beauty, respect for the human individual or for nature. However, in our societies the declared values are often in conflict with actual behaviour and policies[7] .

Buildings can direct our attention to certain things - cultural practices or meanings - and present these as valuable. A lavish building suggests that the activities that take place in it are held in esteem by those who built it and maintain it and thus that what it represents should be esteemed by others also. This suggestion gains force if the authorial function is held by an institution of power. A lavish private house is, in other words, less impressive than a lavish parliament building or a bank headquarters. On the other hand, institutions draw some of their social force and impressiveness from their lodgings, so that a carefully designed building can both affirm and promote what it stands for[8] . What it represents is experienced as being located in or inhabiting a building: power dwells in a palace, and the sacred atmosphere of a church is a breath of the divine.

There is a certain generality of a building's suggestion or statement of value, due to the anonymity of the authorial function but also to how buildings are experienced generally. The statement of the building is often without a signature; it is simply stated rather than stated by someone. In buildings that serve political institutions this is emphasized, for what they state, they state also on our behalf.

A complementary perspective on values and the built environment is to distinguish between values *of* and values *in* the environment. Values of the environment are declared and stated values, but in addition they include what is displayed by buildings rather than openly declared. The built environment is a symptom that displays the values a society or culture actually lives by. A society that declares the ideal of sustainable development but is organized so that it demands a heavy transportation network symptomatically denies what it explicitly declares. So does the society which preaches human rights but leaves the poor on the streets, instead of providing them a place to live.

Values in the environment comprise the possibilities for meaningful experience provided in the environment. The environment may be supportive of valuing relations, rich in sense, but it may also be hostile to humans and other living things. In this respect, I would suggest that the provision of 'space' is important[9] . If the environment provides spaces which are aesthetically rich but to some extent undefined, it may suggest and affirm the dignity of life itself.

Finally, 'value' and 'valuing' are highly abstract, general terms, and it may therefore be useful to complement them with 'worth', which suggests the individual, concrete character and features of a thing[10] . One may then say that we value something because of its worth, remembering that the individual worth of something resists full explanation - it is what it is. It is useful to remember that value exists only in a relation and should not be reified. On the other hand, we do need words like 'freedom' or 'love'. Perhaps the answer to this paradox is that values should not be solely intoned, but also acted upon. Then the tone of voice, the gestures and actions confirm, or disconfirm, what is declared.

The axiological perspectives presented in this final part of the study are critically aesthetic. They are about the possibilities for turning towards and inhabiting a world, about the directions provided to us by a built environment. What is displayed is not identical to what we perceive, but directs us towards certain activities and hinders or rules out others. The supermarket goes with the car and kills the local store: a trivial example that carries implications for immediate sensuous experience, for the sense of place and for social interaction.

In the two chapters that follow, I apply a threefold disposition with the focus on power structures, on social life, and on the existential and biological conditions of human life, which must not be understood to mean that these dimensions are separate. There is no absolute line between existential and social perspectives, and power touches an individual in his most intimate being, which it also must do in order to be effective[11] . The clearly aesthetic aspects of the houses of power, their design, are integral parts of power. On the other hand, how nature is managed, dealt with and displayed in and between building is suggestive not only of our culture's relation to natural phenomena - considered as a separate question - but also of the place of our own bodies in culture. The human environment, the world we inhabit in practice and thought combines, in its concrete reality, social and existential questions.

As Hannah Arendt shows, how the categories of political or public, economic or social and private interact and exist is historically changing and thus has consequences for the conditions of life in a particular society[12]. Arendt's analysis is still in many parts pertinent, and I borrow the idea of a public and a social realm from her. These notions, which are idealizations, make it possible to ask meaningful questions about our situation. For example, is there a public realm today, a common world of political decision-making, or is the postulation of such a realm naive? If there is no such realm, then where is power situated, and how is it displayed in contemporary built environments? Further, if Arendt is right that the economic has replaced the political in contemporary societies, what consequences does this have for the design, use and meaning of public space?

It should be noted that my use of the term 'social' differs from Arendt's. In my view, this category has its basis in the general human condition, not just in historical reality, as Arendt claims. For her, "the most general condition of human existence" is "birth and death, natality and mortality"[13]. But there is probably more than one such condition. Human beings are, from the start, part of the communities of family and group; we exist in situations of social interaction which are, in turn, influenced by political organization. In any human world, there is decision-making regarding others and the use of power, compromise and violence: this is relevant to the relation of self to society. There are also relations between individuals and social situations conditioned by age, sex, health and the need of interaction: these are relevant to the relations of self to others. Finally, there are conditions related to our place in the universe, as finite beings in space and time, questions of meaning and meaninglessness: the relation of self to world.

In chapter six, I look at contemporary buildings and building practices from the point of view of, first, symbols of power and the organization of public space, second, social services and human interaction and, third, the management of nature. This threefold disposition makes possible a focus on kinds of objects and areas in our surroundings as well as a grouping of areas of value which are relevant to the human condition regardless of the particular historical situation. The actualization and articulation of these values is dependent on the context. In chapter seven, I discuss political, social and existential values of the environment in a more general and utopian way, with respect to the needs and possibilities to represent order, allow space for human life, and integrate our existential and natural conditions and the built world so that there would be a basic accord rather than discord between them.

Chapter six

OBSERVATIONS ON CONTEMPORARY BUILDING

> *I imagine an immense city, buildings in glass and steel which touch the sky, reflect it, reflect each other and you; people imbued with their image, hurried, in exaggerated make-up, in gold, in pearls, in exquisite leather; in the nearby streets, filth accumulates and drugs accompany the sleep or rage of the outcasts...*
>
> *This city could be New York, it resembles each big city of tomorrow, our city...*
>
> *What can one do there? One thing only: buy and sell goods or images, which comes down to the same thing, for these are flat symbols, without depth... Those who can, or who try to preserve a life that neutralizes both the luxury and the horror have to create an "interior" for themselves: a secret garden, an intimate hearth, or, more simply and ambitiously, a psychic life.*[14]

In its perspicuity and exaggeration, the above quotation from Julia Kristeva is a good introduction to the present chapter. To describe trends of contemporary urban culture as reflected in building is not an easy task, and I have chosen to proceed by directing my attention to some dominant images of contemporary cities and planning and to what these images leave out. The focus is on negative trends, on threats to the positive qualities I discuss in the next chapter. There are several reasons for this. First, a perspective on contemporary building practices can serve as a necessary background for the values suggested in the next chapter. But it must be emphasized that I do not want to present the relation between the description of present reality and the discussion of dimensions of value as a relation of a defective present to an ideal state. Rather, the discussion of potential environmental value is as much a counter-image to the present state as the other way; both chapters are written in the same situation. To make this more clear, I start with images of the present. Second, the idea is not to give a true picture of the contemporary urban situation in its totality, but a picture that helps in the judgement and evaluation of building trends. If it stands as a caricature rather than a statistical curve in relation to reality, I hope it is a working caricature. The examples I give are meant to be instrumental for a critical analysis, not only of the situation as it is, but also for reflections on future directions.

Kristeva points out that in a city such as she describes, there is scarcely any room "for change and surprise, that is, for life"[15]. Everything is on the surface, on display and for sale, and there are few intimate spaces[16]. This is not the only problem of the contemporary, fast growing metropolises, the centres of the world: there is also little recognizable and recognized hierarchy, few given or stable centres. The *polis* is blurred while public space is planned and managed according to economic demands, a situation which corresponds to the location of effective power. Even if many people live outside the city Kristeva describes - outside and around this juxtaposition of commerce, hi-tech and slums, in areas invisible to the media - the power and effect of such cities on patterns of thinking and bahaviour is efficient and real[17].

To mention the need for depth and interiority may evoke ideas of dwelling and home, but also, perhaps at the same time, of nature - of finding oneself in the shade of trees or listening to the sound of ocean waves. In many modern cities, increased planning creates a situation where there is little room for the spontaneous use of space, for the freedom of lingering and undefined being. The definition and functional appropriation of space is a problem of the physical environment, which may be augmented by the citizens' awareness that the power to determine the future of their immediate habitat is located somewhere else. Too much or too little planning may have the same detrimental effect on the inhabitants' possibilities to appropriate their environment and develop a responsible relationship to it: in one case the environment is managed from above, by others, in the other it is managed by no one and is thereby under the constant threat of development. In neither case does it pay to care: it is better to proceed as in the supermarket, if one can afford it - choose a better brand, move to a better and more protected place.

If part of the public and shared built environment represents society as political and power structures, other parts, such as housing areas, schools or hospitals, belong to the community aspect of society. Increasing scales of building and paces of change cause problems not only in city centres, where the symbolic representation of a state or community and particularly its historical continuity are at stake, but also in the community spaces proper, in social life. In these contexts, ideally, the individual may matter as a person and individual. It is in school, at work, with neighbours, in the shops and pubs that my identity is shaped; where I may be myself or play a role in the pleasures of semi-anonymity, recognized but not defined by others. In such spaces there is the possibility to withdraw, not just by going home, but also in the awareness of keeping my secrets in the midst of conversation. Communal spaces are important for identity also because they may offer opportunities for the individual to make imprints on or influence the environment. The relation of individual and environment is then reciprocal in a very concrete sense: not only does the environment support me, I also support it. That the relation may also be destructive or inhibiting goes without saying.

A third aspect of building and planning is the management of nature, which I shall discuss from the point of view of how *natura naturata* is dealt with and displayed in urban and regional planning. The importance of parks and greenery is recognized; however in building and planning, other than ecological considerations are generally given more weight. Looking at examples from some European cities and New York, it seems that if nature is valued - even increasingly so - this valuation too often takes the form of a museolization where some pieces and areas are elevated into the rank of masterworks and supposedly preserved, while the ecosystem as a whole, including humans and nature as it permeates everyday life, is given little attention. 'Untouched nature' or the wonders of nature, displayed on television, can function to veil exploitation.

Celebration of values

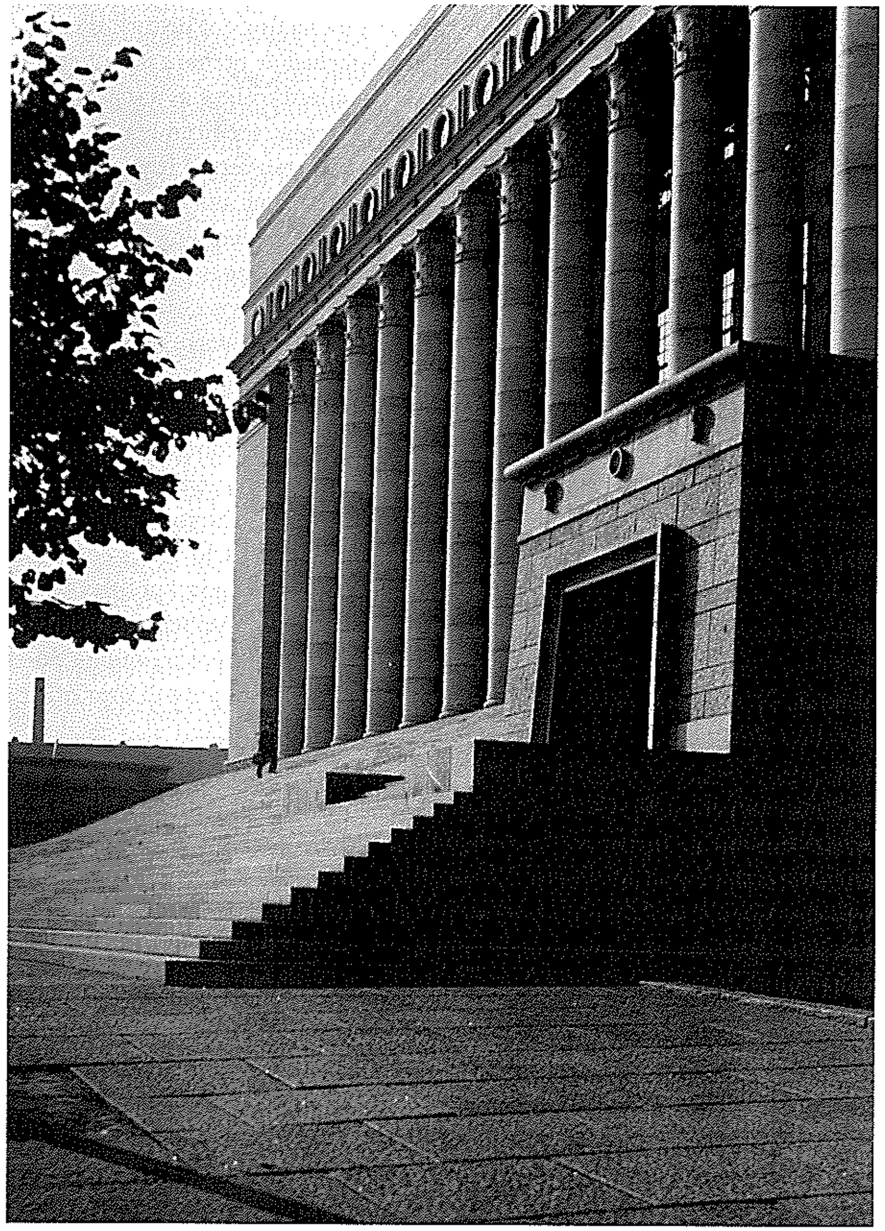
One of the functions buildings perform is to represent the institutions that are the structural backbone of a society and the values that keep it together. This has been presented as the function of architecture properly so called, the art of building. We find echoes of this idea in Heidegger, who describes the temple as the foundation of a culture, in Wittgenstein's statement that "where there is nothing to glorify, there can be no architecture", in Adolf Loos' idea of the tomb and the monument as the only forms of building as a true art, in Josef Frank's blunt observation that buildings express power already through their size and magnitude, or in Georges Bataille's sinister conviction that architecture by its totalitarian character commands and masters social life, smothers it "under a stone monument"[18]. Architecture in this sense is hard to integrate in an anarchistic or emancipatory world view, for building is by nature constructive, not deconstructive, edifying rather than critical[19]. With symbolic architecture I refer to this dimension of building: architecture as celebration, affirmation and foundation of values and value structures. In this perspective, architecture is also a question of power, and not just of the images, but also of the exercise of power.

Many writers have noted a crisis in contemporary architecture that is related not only to the growing amount and speed of communication and transport systems, but also to the dominance of representations of architecture and environment over real-life experiences[20]. Through these tendencies, our perception of the environment changes more and more towards flat images, emblems, mere signs[21]. The environmental image, produced and transformed over time in multisensuous, layered and personal experience, is exchanged for mere recognition, where we perceive functions rather than places. Still one may say that changes in perception are secondary to the changes in building and planning that directly effect our material environment. The deterioration or collapse of the hierarchical structures of cities, particularly city centres, is in turn caused by changes in the structures of administration and the location of power, simultaneous with changes in political thinking and behaviour. It is perhaps symptomatic that it is today hard to find visions or even guidelines for city or regional planning comparable to those produced after World War II, when the task of rebuilding large parts of Europe was imminent. Only by overlooking the fact that present building activities have an impact on urban, rural and natural landscapes that is bigger than the effects of any previous war can one say that today there is no such imminent task.

Today building takes place, on the whole, without attempts to find legitimation in other terms than those of economic necessity. Hannah Arendt may have been right in her view that in modern Western society the realm of economic considerations has taken over and replaced the public realm of properly political discussion, where different values and positions are compared and weighed against each other[22]. Further, in the present situation economic considerations are no longer considered as merely economic, or related to the management of common goods; instead they have taken the place of ultimate value. Alongside economic growth, the development of transport systems and communications are being prioritized in decision-making and planning. In an attempt to sympathetically interpret this development, one may say that it is all about facilitating the free mobility and circulation of people, goods and ideas, while at the same time protecting the freedom of each to be what he or she wants to be.[23] However, while the values promoted in this process - such as economic interaction, mobility and communication - in themselves are immaterial, their promotion has effects on the physical environment which may in the long run even permanently damage the cultural dimension of human interaction, not to mention the biosphere. Following Arendt, the disappearance of places, the eradication of recognizable locality might be destructive not only of individual difference but also of positions from which to raise one's voice[24]. Present development, where communication is so highly praised, may lead to a point where no one has anything to say any longer - a point where many popular media arrived long ago.

Meanwhile, building goes on. It would be naive to look back with longing towards a situation of centralized planning and hierarchically structured public spaces, for that situation perhaps never existed, and in our longing we would necessarily disregard complexities and disadvantages. Nevertheless, it is scarcely paranoid to note the high impact of commercial building and building dictated by economic and transportation demands on our most public, shared environment[25]. As a result, the hierarchy of the total environment is becoming mixed, multiple, blurred. The lack of congruence between officially acclaimed power structures, such as democratic institutions, and the landmarks of cities and areas contribute to the lack of hierarchy. Where is the centre of a city today? It would be too easy to say that it is where people gather, for then we disregard the public and shared aspect of space. Also, although my home is the centre of my home town considered as an inhabited world, I would not say that my home is the centre of Helsinki, and much less that it is the centre of the capital of Finland. The real problem is that I am not sure whether I should call the Finnish Parliament house the centre of power, although our constitution suggests this. But if that building is not a symbolic, political centre, there might be no centre in this country.

The question of architecture as a symbol of power touches on the location of effective power, for a symbol does not symbolize irrespective of our knowledge and beliefs. The built symbol functions as a symbol in the



scaling. J.S. Sirén, Finnish Parliament House, HCM, photo R. Roos 1930 present only if it actualizes the bringing-together of what it stands for, and its standing there[26]. To actualize this, not only must the building be present; also the institution and what the institution stands for must be experienced as contemporary, real, and effective. The ruins of past powers no longer dominate and subject us; at most they inspire feelings of historical curiosity, sentimental fantasies, polite reverence, detached or perhaps even fictional fear or distaste[27]. In such cases we have ritualized feeling as a separate activity, compared to our real and inescapable, present predicament.

If in our contemporary world power has been transferred from democratic, national institutions to transnational organizations and corporations, the administrative centres of cities and countries are undergoing a change in status[28]. To the degree that citizens are aware of the changes in the location of power, we can suppose that their experience of the city is changing. The Parliament House is no longer in any self-evident way a centre of power: although it still is a place where Finnish citizens govern themselves through representative democracy, the scope of the power and influence of representative democracy has decreased. The nation-state and its political structures are subjected to stronger powers; not just through international agreements, which are entered on the free will of each actor, but also through the impact of the multinational corporations, which are not bound by loyalties or responsibilities to the people of any region. Domestic and foreign politics today is done very much on terms dictated by the economic sphere, where the dominance of economic concerns is dependent on the consensus, among political actors, regarding the absolute primacy of economic growth over other concerns and values.

It might be objected that expectations as to the existence of centralized power are mistaken. Recognizable power structures, such as built symbols or institutions, are emblematic, but in fact they only conceal how power actually works and always has worked on citizens when internalized by them. But one can ask whether such an analysis, which could find support in some works by Heidegger or Foucault, does not presuppose what needs to be questioned especially in the present situation: the homogeneity of the culture and society of a particular period[29]. The idea that power is everywhere, rather than exercised and emanating from some particular place, becomes questionable and itself ideological the moment it is seen to comprise not only the general exercise of power but also its particular forms and contents. Then it affirms the logic of the social and economic realm: that all values are in fact interests and basically alike, that an irreducible difference between perspectives is illusory.

It is undeniable that in urban environments changes in hierarchic legibility have taken place during this century[30]. There is no longer one symbolic centre for the citizen or subject to relate to, but many competing centres, whose recognition, in terms of political understanding and analysis as well as environmental perception, is more difficult than before. Particularly the relations of the buildings and institutions to place and community are hard

to detect. Public buildings are still constructed and may be given the role of maintaining the identity and pride of a community, but among outstanding structures in contemporary urban environments public buildings do not dominate. In order to give some pointers for understanding the conditions of environmental experience today, with respect to symbolic architecture and the locations of power and value, I shall discuss three areas of building where significant investments in terms of economic and symbolic value are being made. Possibly other areas could be found. The first of these comprises the headquarters of big trade corporations and transnational companies, where the World Trade Centres that spring up in different parts of the world are good examples[31] vision of the good life does not steer the project, but is rather supposed to be the consequence of economic development.. The second is buildings of cultural or religious importance, of which the series of Grand projects in Paris from the 1970s to today are an interesting example. Reconstruction projects are discussed in this context. The third area of building is by far the biggest and the most dominant, if we consider the total environment: it comprises transport and communication structures[32]. In addition, one area or perspective, related to communication, shall be added. Media influence our experience of real space and are especially important for the perception of the architecture of power. I shall include some reflections on the effects of media on the experience and use, planning and construction of the material environment.

In the first group of symbolic architecture, buildings belonging to organizations that hold economic power, I shall refer to lower Manhattan as an example, and compare the recent developments there with Rockefeller Center, which is about half a century older. The Twin Towers of the World Trade Center, with their 110 stories the tallest buildings in New York, and the neighbouring World Financial Center, are splendid specimens of this kind of building. To quote from the Michelin Touring Guide's description of the latter:

> *Its four glass and granite-sheathed office towers (...) encompass 7,000,000sq ft of office space, and are home to some of the nation's most prestigious brokerage and financial services firms - American Express, Dow Jones, Merrill Lynch. Marked by setbacks and notches, and topped with geometrically shaped copper roofs, the buildings of the World Financial Center present a graceful blend of traditional and contemporary design elements (...) Highlighting the WFC is the* ***Winter Garden*** *(1987), a barrel-vaulted glass and steel structure reminiscent of London's 19C Crystal Palace. This attractive space offers performing arts programs and events, and houses shops and a variety of restaurants. Sixteen 45ft palm trees dot the large plaza, which culminates in the grand central staircase. Weary shoppers can rest on the benches and admire the fascinating play of light on the glass.*[33]

site Construction site in Kallio 23.7.1962. HCM

In New York City, the World Financial Center is one among a multitude of buildings used for business, but it is also easy to see it as a cathedral among the various smaller temples devoted to the cult of Mammon. The Winter Garden is indeed luxurious with its central staircase appearing as a place for admiration, exposure and flirt in the style of old opera houses. To expose oneself here demands, however, some self-confidence; to fit in with the style of the building one had better be properly dressed. As a weary shopper we would not expect any low-income single mother. It is also significant that the Michelin guide suggests the fascinating play of light on the glass as an object of admiration, for except the provision of open space - potentially a space for human interaction and communication - there are few if any clues about the specific values celebrated by the building. As compared with the WFC, a church - even an ascetic one - abounds with symbols, so that light becomes suggestive of the transcendent which is central in the contemplative or ritualistic visit to a church. This is due, of course, to existing cultural practices of interpretation and seeing-as: the church is, after all, a house of God. But what is the WFC a house of, and what would the narratives and symbols that could populate this building be like? There is nothing to fill the space with meaning: only palms, expensive materials, copper and glass, staircases soft and wide, and a view across the river[34]. A paradox is involved, for while the space suggests that all our needs are satisfied, it suggests no deeper desires[35]. It is a purely hedonistic space.

Financial capitals - New York, Shanghai, or Hong Kong - manifest high skylines and suggest a multitude of people and activities, but their architecture does not attempt to articulate civic virtues or human values related to some idea of a good life. There is no attempt to legitimize power. In this respect, the Rockefeller Center in New York, built mainly between 1933 and 1973, differs in its discernible attempt to give human significance to the spaces: a human-size articulation and furnishing of the central plazas, with benches and plants, so that they feel intimate in scale and easy to relate to, especially if compared to the open, immense and as it were abandoned flat area at the foot of the Twin Towers. The variety and beauty of the flower gardens at Rockefeller Center, in the midst of a mixed urban context, is accessible and approachable by any passer-by, regardless of income, profession or cultural capital. The WTO and the WFC are, on the contrary, surrounded by buffer zones of sophisticated parks, shops and promenades with no direct contact to mixed street life.

In the history of the site at Rockefeller Center and in the articulation of the complex there is a tendency of turning towards and serving humanity, as individual human beings[36]. There is a humble tone to the celebration of values, due partly to the way in which space is articulated and yet left to the citizens to use and occupy: a multiplicity of perspectives, a possibility to look at and through the plaza, where one perspective is neither dominant nor prioritized. This is the experience of being on the plaza. From the skyscraper, one can look down and take in the whole, but only imperfectly:

because of notches and trees the eye cannot take in, in one glance, everything that happens out there. The openness around the Twin Towers or in the staircase at the WFC is, on the contrary, exposing.

It seems that when discourses of management and economy occupy the centre stage of the public realm - which should be taken up by ideological discussion - the structures which manifest economic power appear as images of pure quantity and vitality. But there is also a difference in the relations of subjects and power in today's situation, compared to an earlier paternal relation of economic power and citizens or workers, where the company owners in the best cases had both a human and an economic interest in the welfare of the workers. The difference is not just that the sense of responsibility, of serving the people, is diminished, but that the people have become as faceless and placeless as the architecture which manifests the power of money[37]. Why build a plaza where citizens can taste, or even contemplate, the good life that wealth provides, in a time when the people serving the corporations and those served by it are different, live in different places and do not know each other? An image of happy workers is no more relevant or interesting, for the shareholders do not know or mind to know where the workers are and what their life is like[38]. Better, therefore, to create icons from which the human being is altogether absent, to make believe that money generates money all by itself. Thus the risk of disturbance by conscience is minimized.

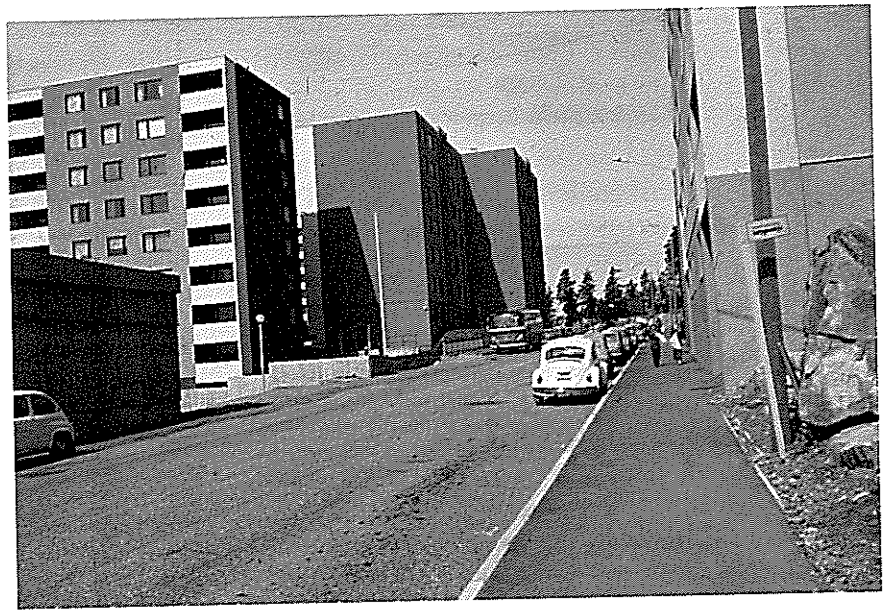
The second group of symbolic architecture comprises various palaces of culture, including sports stadiums, museums, opera and concert halls, libraries - generally, buildings of civic importance, often financed and built by the public sector. These are buildings where people may go to enlarge and share knowledge and experience, to be amused and to learn things, but also to mingle with others. Although these buildings and institutions are not innocent when it comes to the formation of world views or disciplinary techniques of citizenry, one must be paranoid to deny that they exist through a belief in the importance of civic life and for its enhancement[39].

In Europe, among the boldest, if not the boldest of contemporary projects of cultural edifices is the series of cultural buildings in Paris, starting with *Centre Georges Pompidou*, finished in 1977, and continuing to the new national library, *Bibliothêque de France*[40]. The boldness of these projects is related to their openly modern character; modern in the sense of contemporary, but also as openly related to the emancipatory narratives of modernity[41]. Thus Franqois Mitterrand, in a preface to a special issue of the arts journal *Connaissance des Arts*, *Grands Travaux*, mentions that the projects will facilitate the access of the public at large to the intellectual, artistic, technical and scientific heritage. Since "to live in the present is to be able to situate oneself", this is relevant for the future as well, and it is here that the belief in progress through enlightenment is at its clearest. "To give life to the future is, in mixing dream and knowledge, to make the choice of imagination, of formation, of adaptation to a future which, if it does not predict, prepares itself," Mitterrand continues. He also points to the importance of the projects for the city "as a form of collective life" with a "multiplicity of meanings, trajectories, symbols which make the city living and livable."[42]

Although the Grand works of Paris are symbolic architecture and manifestations, if not monuments, of the will of a ruler, they are not only directed as lessons to the people but also there for people to use and appropriate in their own way. This feature is present in varying degrees in the buildings, but its sheer existence, which can be experienced on the spot, indicates that symbolic architecture need not smother social life but can become significant, in its own particular way, in and through social life. One reason to include the *Centre Pompidou* in the series of Grand works - which were also presidential projects - is that through its non-classical and anti-institutional character, its inconguity in the city structure and simultaneous great popularity[43] it deconstructed and thereby emancipated the idea of a cultural monumental building. Thus it prepared the stage for the later, architecturally less radical but often similarly original projects. Another thing to note about *Centre Pompidou*, or *Beaubourg*, as it was first called, is its location in a low-status area. Monumental building is here not just affirmative, but also consciously transformative in its intentions.

A significant relation of building to site is characteristic also of many of the projects of the 1980s. I shall comment upon some of these because of their architectural qualities or interest, but also because they demonstrate different relations of building, site, and values. A first thing to note is the quality of Paris itself as a city of universalism and even its foremost centre in the Western cultural sphere. Expectations and assumptions of universal applicability are integral to the French intellectual tradition from the Enlightenment to deconstruction in a way which distinguishes it from Anglo-American, German or Russian traditions: in France, the tendency towards internationalism appears as an important national characteristic[44] In the same text, Derrida describes the European spirit as transgressive, thus both inclusive and tolerant of difference, and defends the duty to open Europe, to always go further and change things. This simultaneously self-critical and self-assured attitude is, to my mind, a French virtue - which is not to deny that universalism in practice may appear in an ironic light.. Therefore universalism, as represented by a building, is a feature which constitutes a link between building and place, rather than a barrier or distance. That architects from different parts of the world have been engaged in the projects, which in their institutional functions, taken together, cover most significant areas of human knowing and culture (including diversity) is a reason for a pride which, like the buildings, has a national location but is international in scope[45].

Two projects which demonstrate the universal character are *Arche de la Défense* in the north-west and *Bibliothêque de France* in the south-east from the centre of Paris. In both projects, the intentions are interesting and praiseworthy, but to experience the buildings brings in additional features which to some extent contradict these intentions. I shall first refer to the



transportation Pihlajisto, MFA

officially expressed ideas of the projects and then to some personal experiences, which highlight a difference between the symbolic form of the architectural project and situationally experienced meaning, or between values *of* and values *in* the built environment. This difference is not an essential feature of architecture; as I shall try to show later in other examples of the Grand works where there is no problematic cleft between idea and experience.

The *Arche* was planned by a Danish architect, Johan Otto von Spreckelsen, who won the competition for a central building in the *Défense* area in 1983 with an entry which, according to Virginie Picon-Lefebvre, could "be considered as the most strange - a perfect cube 100 metres tall - and the most familiar - inscribing itself in the tradition of the triumphal arc". She continues to point out the parallels to the revolutionary architects two hundred years earlier, particularly appropriate because the new arch was inaugurated at the bicentennial jubilee of the French Revolution. The geometrical forms and the ensuing disciplined layout of space did not, however, correspond to an intention related to disciplined use of space. Rather, it seems, the contrary. Spreckelsen thought of the cube as an interface between the city and the suburban areas (*les banlieus*), where the terrace under the roof of the cube would function as a meeting-point and the cube itself as a window through which the historical axis from the *Arc de Triomphe* would continue and acquire an additional, reversed direction, towards the centre of the city.[46]

As experienced, the cube does not quite live up to these intentions. One problem - one among those that made the architect abandon the project in 1986, one year before his death - is that all but one floor of the cube are closed to the public. Instead of being a meeting-point of communication, the cube is, for the visitor who does not work for the private companies that use the other floors, a principally inaccessible showpiece. One can enter an elevator and be transported to the top floor, where the *Fondation des Droits de l'Homme* is located; one can go out on the terrace and admire the views. The anonymous office and apartment buildings, the empty, wind-driven space is far below, so much lower that one knows rather than sees that at one's feet, there is a city of ten million inhabitants. The view is grand but hardly engaging. Inside, one can look at expositions and at a film about the process of construction of the building.

When I visited the cube in the summer 1993, there was an exhibition on the concentration camp in Pithiviers. Together with the film, where Spreckelsen talked about his vision of the building as a window to the world, this struck a tragic note. The sad mood was also due to my walking around in *La Défense* before going up, on sterile walkways, one of them called *La Pacific*, where a sense of place was attempted through an ornament of stylized ocean waves. As a symbol of or to humanity, the whole complex is characterized by a lack of human qualities and a high level of abstract symbolization. But the human body, the experiencer in her concrete thereness, almost loses herself in this environment; in terms of bodily perception there is very little to relate to[47]. The buildings are engaged in a dialogue among themselves rather than with the visitor. "The clouds become funny, as if framed by the big buildings, so big that one can hardly call them houses ... the scale is repellant"[48]. Indeed, on my visit the clouds were among the few living things to be seen, other than the humans, who appeared subdued and thoughtful.

Here, if ever, one finds a sublime in architecture, a sublime related to the mathematical sublime as described by Kant, which makes us, through its sheer mass, aware of the limits of our sensory powers and bodily existence[49]. However, the *Défense* and the cube did not cause a sense of pride of human reason but, rather, a sense of sadness and despair at facing the unreason of the unlimited use of technology. It seems, then, that to symbolize values by architecture - in this case humanity or human life - is not enough and does not work, however great and admirable the built structures, if the habitat provided around and by these structures is not perceived as supporting the values.

A similar problem is attached to the new library, *Bibliothêque de France*, in the Tolbiac area south-east from the centre of Paris. Here, there was an attempt to regenerate both site and institution, and the library itself is described as "a place for the appeal of the book and the incitement to culture"[50]. But what book and what culture, one may then ask? The library is on each side surrounded by sloping stairs, which lift it up from the surrounding area, as on a pedestal. Four book towers rise from this platform, not unlike space rockets ready to lift off. Even if these associations are rejected as too wild, it is still undeniable that the library is monumental, abstract and detaches itself from the surrounding area. The book and the culture suggested are far from the intimate feel and scents of books that have a material reality, a weight and a history of reading, of having been held by other hands. Culture is presented by the building in a way that is close to the perspective of technological rationality: as an anonymous, timeless body of knowledge.

Although the enthusiasm for science and technology is present also in *La Villette*, particularly in the part which is consecrated to them, the layout and use of space and its relation to the adjoining areas are very different. One enters the city of sciences into a space which is not unlike a shopping centre, whether in physical layout or atmosphere. The space is playful and unceremonious, and the same qualities characterize, even more, the park with its follies and the complex called the city of music, "living, fluid, founded on the notion of plurality"[51]. Equally and perhaps even more important than architectural design is the way in which the *Villette* area integrates the neighbourhood; one must note that the openness of the area is due to both the design and the policy of the cultural institutions, and that these factors interact because they influence and stimulate visitors in their own ways.

Also in the *Opéra-Bastille* there is a meaningful relation to place, but in this case the actual history comes to the fore. The relation is present through the name of the building, which is also the name of the place and which

does not reject, but together with the building's function and design retains, rejuvenates and transforms the tragic and heroic phases of history attached to the place[52]. Neither national history nor the character of the place are sealed off, but instead treated in acknowledgement and admittance of continuity, in a strategy of creative collaboration[53] which demands more responsibility and judgement, but is also more fruitful than a strategy of musealization.

Some of the Grand works of Paris are or become monuments - places for meaning and history - through their own qualities[54]. For this reason, they serve as positive examples of value experienced in the environment, where value becomes a feature of the building rather than being ascribed to the building beforehand. But there are other, less encouraging examples of recent symbolic or monumental building. Our Saviour's Church in Moscow, a huge structure finished in 1883 after 45 years of construction, then demolished by Josef Stalin in 1931 after 48 years of use, and now rebuilt, may be taken as an example of the limits of reconstruction, even when the building is of undeniable cultural and political significance[55]. A weakness inherent in the copying of demolished buildings is that they fail to represent continuity, since in supposedly reproducing a past structure as it once was they deny the specificity of the present and so fail to establish a relation between the then and the now. Also the future suggested by the building is characterized by the obligation to look back. In this way, the creative and transformative potential, as well as the desires and needs proper to the present, are denied in the wish to leave things as they are, or were[56]. But this is impossible, since life goes on and cultures change. Therefore, it is as if the building told us that there was hope at that time, but there is no hope any more.

However, one should not overlook the fact that the Moscow church is a church and that religious values are eternal in character. Saddam Hussein's decision to build the world's largest mosque in Bagdad is similarly meaningful because he thereby associates himself with the highest power, the power of God[57]. It seems undeniable that the most powerful monumental buildings gather the ruler, God, building and ritual. In this process, a unity is established where the ruler continuously receives power by being the elected, the one who serves as the mediator between God and people, incarnating a bond and standing for the unity of the people[58]. Such a building does not just stand as a symbol before people, but serves as a space for renewed affirmation and transference of power from people to the ruler, all in the name of God.

From buildings that represent economic power or cultural values I shall now move to the third area of building: traffic routes. These stand out, and I have chosen to include them because of their great impact on urban and rural landscapes. Yet one may doubt whether they are critically attended to to a degree that equals the money which is invested in them and their impact on ecosystems, on the shape of landscapes and on environmental perception[59]. Modern highways, railroads and airports with their large runway areas long ago, through their size and salience, crossed the border between given, natural features of landscape and planned and constructed human artefacts. By this I do not deny that the highway may be experienced as perfectly natural in the sense of normal or everyday[60]; but I want to point out the difference in degree and character between a path and a highway, a difference found in the relations of road to both land and landscape. Whereas roads earlier were part of the landscape, the modern route dissociates itself from its environment. The highway's surface is of an inorganic, smooth material and it typically runs either over or through the adjacent land, not on its level. Walls for noise protection or environmental art along the road frame the driving space and only enforce the road's character as a self-contained space[61]. When we are on it, the road is the place from which we perceive, which might be a reason why roads are given little attention in discussions of the built environment. On the other hand, the bigger the road, the more it becomes, itself, the object and encompassing context of perception. What the driver sees, looking on both sides, is roadside rather than land. At some points, the landscape around the road may have been completely swallowed and subordinated to the road.

As symbols - if not in the landscape then at least in the mindscape - and in public discussion, roads seem more important today than railway stations or airports, which once were, similarly, the symbols of a new time with faster communications. These are symbols of the conquering of space as an obstacle to human action. Today, the value of routes is more and more linked to the group of symbolic buildings I started with. For example, the E18 highway, which is planned to run from Turku in Finland to St Petersburg, is accompanied by great expectations in terms of the money it shall bring to the area it runs through. But it is clear that a road is a significant symbol in other respects too; E18 is called "the grandest main route of the North, an esteemed link between East and West".[62]

Many of the buildings of contemporary symbolic or monumental architecture appear to be meant for the map or for the media rather than for place or community[63]. They may disregard the history or actual present state of the site, the sum of what exists there, and instead rely on abstract plans or on reconstruction, which is often equally violent in its consequences for the present state. "[C]ontempt and hate for the *present world*" where "real space is finally perceived as nothing but an obstacle", which Paul Virilio relates to the increased speed of travelling, also characterizes building[64]. The disappearance of public and local history from general awareness and from material reality go hand in hand.

To build for the map is to build primarily with respect to the building's appearance in the media and to its presence in public awareness. Today, it is not the book but the media that attack the cathedral, and although the effects are not lethal, they are serious. However, Victor Hugo's characterization of the book as more permanent than the building is not appropriate for the experience of media or of the web, which are, rather, due

not only to the amount of information but also to the ease of updating and replacing, characterized by a state of flux[65]. On the other hand, in the relation between the book and the building, between coded information and material edifice, there is more at stake than immaterial versus material symbolization. The first and most evident interpretation of the killing of the cathedral by the book that Hugo mentions, and passes over, is that religious power will be replaced by the press[66]. There can be no doubt that in the West religious power has been replaced, many would say, by the media, but these are curious power-holders. If a process of disappearance of the representation and presence of institutions in buildings, of their fixity in certain localities and edifices, from general awareness is going on, as William J. Mitchell suggests, this means that power becomes less recognizable and so more easily escapes responsibility[67].

The difficulty of locating power in the contemporary world, which I pointed to in the beginning of this section, is a difficulty of identifying the institutions and agents that actually hold effective power, and of locating these in physical space. The reasons for picking out buildings belonging to the sphere of business and economy as prime examples of contemporary symbolic architecture is not only that these are outstanding buildings - others can be found - but that the primacy of economic considerations in public discussion is hard to contest. Economy is, a century and a half after Karl Marx, the indubitable value of Western society. A working economy is expected to bring about the blessings of good life; an idea similar in structure and consequences to the contested functionalist credo of early modernist architecture that form follows function, and that reflections on value as separate from functionality and performativity are therefore useless[68]. An emphasis on smooth functioning and efficient movement also lies behind the hope invested in communications infrastructure, which in Finland is no more, as it still was in the 1970s, motivated by employment. Today employment is not a question that is allowed to influence the macro-economy; that industry needs fewer and fewer workers and especially shuns countries where wages are relatively higher is accepted as a given condition. The good life must follow economy; it must not step ahead of it.

To discuss cultural buildings together with buildings that serve economic and communications purposes may appear strange. If it is accepted that the flows of money, goods, people and ideas are prioritized and have become ends in themselves, what status can the palaces of culture, as physical spaces, then have? The suspicion is, of course, that they are nothing but stage props, empty declarations of the good will of the state towards citizens. On the other hand, the greatest importance of the cultural buildings is not that they are manifestations, images or symbols of good intentions, but that they are spaces were people may actually gather - common spaces. If the buildings of official power, such as government and parliament, for most people are open only to mediated and predefined glimpses - where they have become more accessible through electronic media, but only for observation - cultural buildings are open not only for visits but for use which sometimes (not always) includes the possibility to actively do things. If mobile citizens have no place of their own to speak from, and if the public realm, considered as a whole, does not exist, there might still be the possibility to have spaces for interaction and discussion on a local ground, with questions that are unlimited in scope. But before probing this possibility, a look at contemporary common spaces and the character of community is necessary.

Common and social space

> *if upon encountering a new building we find nothing for us, but rather the projective identification of the architect, this is a symptom of a culture of architecture that is a culture of escape*[69]

In this section, I discuss the community aspect of buildings and urban space: buildings and spaces which serve, on the one hand, socially and politically defined needs such as education and health care and, on the other, more undefined desires and needs related to the household, reproduction, personal identity and human relations. I start with comments on the metacultural aspects, then I look at social life as it takes place and is enframed in different functional areas. In addition, I shall pay attention to the impact of contemporary transportation and communication - including the electronic media - on the experience of the built environment, space and place, and end by returning to the more general aspects, this time with an emphasis on experience.

In the passage quoted above, the architect Aldo Gargani describes contemporary culture, particularly architecture, as a culture of escape. Counterexamples exist, but it would be unwise to close one's eyes to the negative trends in the contemporary formation of environments. Problems have developed beyond planning, while an abstract, quantifying relation to the environment is still dominant in planning practices. Another major environmental problem is the lack of comprehensive planning[70]. The belief in technical rationality and in the possibilities to shape the future and create a good life through the means of planning seems gone. The fatalism of fragmentation, which Gregotti claims as characteristic of the discourse of architecture, also characterizes building practices[71]. We are left with technology without an overarching rationality, steered, rather, by separate interests and in a situation, as M. Christine Boyer says, of global urban disruption[72]. Atopical spaces not only lack a relation to place and history, but pathways and access are increasingly abstract[73]. This development has negative consequences for the structuring and visibility of political power, but its consequences for social life are even more fundamental, for while power has always appeared in symbolic form, in social life aspects of material, sensuousness and chance play an important role.

Common spaces, spaces for everyday occupations, business and encounters are found in housing areas, on yards and streets, in schools, churches, hospitals, sports grounds, parks, community centres, shops, restaurants, libraries, theatres and cinemas, as well as in public means of transportation. Although these are also functional spaces and areas, at least to some extent, the reason to visit them and the experience of being in them has other aspects in addition to satisfying a need or attending to business. This is perhaps most evident in shopping, which has become a major leisure activity.

Typical of these areas, in different degrees, is their semi-private, yet public status. This is particularly true of institutions related to care, education or training. An old people's home or a hospital is open for the public only at certain hours, and people are supposed to visit only if they know someone there. In schools visits do not belong to the normal course of events; in this they are like any other workplace. In prisons visits are possible, but the space and time allowed for them is strictly regulated. Still these buildings have a public character: they are built and upheld by and for the community or state and in principle, anybody can become an inmate. The decisive factors, for example age, state of health, conviction of a crime, are impersonal. There is a group of people who inhabit and use the building, yet it belongs, in a different way, equally to each member of society. The significance of the building is felt in two ways, from inside and outside. While for the law-abiding citizen the prison is a presence of law, crime and punishment; for the prisoner it is a dwelling, a frame and a context, however temporary or detested. For one, the relationship is symbolic, general and abstract, for the other, concrete and personal. In discussing common spaces, the concrete and personal aspect is the important one.

Other common spaces, such as shops and malls, banks, squares, parks, cultural centres, restaurants, libraries, are more or less open for anybody. Usually there are some restrictions, but they are not about functional roles so much as about personal appearance or behaviour, and are either minimal or negative. For example, there used to be a minimal demand for men to wear a tie in restaurants in Finland; a general negative demand is that people are sober, dressed, and not too noisy or smelly in public places. These restrictions must be applied with judgement, and therefore the guard or the policeman is seen as a practitioner of power; a power that is annoying since it is not exactly defined in law and is practiced face-to-face. Also, the more planned and functional the space, the more are people expected to behave properly, whatever the limits of proper behaviour are. The paradox of customer friendliness is, sometimes, that one must first agree to be a certain kind of person.

Moving now to a more specific discussion, where I shall not deal with all the buildings and spaces that possibly belong to the domain of common space, I shall try to combine observations, some of them very brief, on contemporary types of common spaces with reflections on such themes as the possibilities for personal encounters, accessibility, defined versus open functionality, and the individuality of places, groups and persons.

In housing we find the most intimate, everyday and basic type of shared space. I shall not peep into the apartments, nor shall I comment upon particular environments in detail, but only make general observations on how these areas are built and planned and how they frame urban, social and aesthetic experience. During this century, most housing has been built in areas reserved for that purpose, and many areas have been planned and built at one time. If the architecture is satisfactory and the site is beautiful, the result is usually good. But regardless of quality, the practice of building an area at one time using modern construction often has a devastating impact on the existing place, with its cultural and natural history. Modern construction techniques often efface the place and replace authenticity with construction or reconstruction that not only destroy the temporal continuity of nature but also the existing, material tissue of social and cultural history. After this, the individual character of an area is a matter of immediate sensory impressions which may be combined with historical knowledge, but the latter is applied to the area rather than perceived as embodied by it. In the present of the area there is little relation to its past.[74]

The topography of an area is often among its most important characteristic features, as is the case in the Helsinki area of *Kruununhaka*, for the most part built during the late nineteenth and the early twentieth century. The grid plan and the density of the buildings are lightened by streets that run up and down, reminding us not only of the natural, geological, archipelagan environment still present literally under our feet, but also invoking images of the fishermen and cattle that inhabited this part of the city only two hundred years ago. When topography is preserved or respected, the area's relation to its physical and temporal contexts - the land that stretches out around it and the history that embraces it - are not eradicated but remain virtual strands of experience.

The scale of building - proportions and size in relation to the environment, as judged by a perceiver - is an aspect with similar consequences for the perceived and experienced relations of buildings to environment. Generally, the bigger the buildings, the more autonomous they appear. But size is never just a relation between a building and the environment, it also, and foremost, includes the perceiver. There is no scale that is not a human scale from the start, no scaling without the presence of a subject. A building, and now we may think concretely of a dwelling - a cottage or a multistorey apartment house - greets its inhabitants and visitors in certain ways through its overall size and details. The doorhandle may be set too high, the windows blurred by distance: proportions human or inhuman.

Today, many apartment buildings set themselves over the human being and over the natural environment[75] . At some point, the building may tear itself apart from the human scale altogether and is then no longer experienced as one object but becomes an indefinitely extending environment. In a similar way a built area may outscale the human perceiver horizontally, by stretching out monotonously, which has consequences for how

he perceives himself and his fellows. A large-scale, monotonous housing area contributes to making the inhabitants lose contact with each other. The apartment becomes a nest in a desert: alone, for there are few signs of playful or caring human habitation in the environment. Such an environment is not the place for making contacts; social relations become thought of as cutting through the environment that surrounds one rather than being part of a lived environment. The surrounding space is obstacle and distances rather than dwelling-place.

Not only are many housing areas built at one time, they are also mono- rather than multifunctional in character. This further impedes social contacts: if there are no reasons to spend time outside, an engaged relation to the social and natural environment is not likely to develop. A lack of activities goes counter to appropriation and to a sense of belonging and responsibility. As people in an area are largely unknown to each other, they may not feel that it has a character, and thus they do not relate to it.

The monofunctional housing area is often separated from the city and from aspects of urban life that are not directly related to dwelling. If my dwelling is my place in the environment, the centre of my world thought of concretely, the separation of my dwelling area from the city then means that I have no place in the city. The same may be true for a place of work. The separation of dwelling areas from city centres is true of both low- and high-income areas. An extreme example of this development are the North American common-interest housing developments (CIDs), privatized zones with their own surveillance and security systems. Boyer notes that the "predominantly white, middle-class citizens of Privatopia give (...) up their freedom and privacy" and are "offered in return (...) an alternative quasi-governmental regime exclusively for the well-to-do"[76] . According to her, one-eighth of the US population live in such areas today[77] .

Privatopia is an environmental and social phenomenon with important cultural and political dimensions. It has ramifications outside the view that people must have the right to choose how to live: their choice influences the lives of others and the public sphere. The community of the private zones fits with neither the principles of *jus solis* nor *jus sanguinis*, citizenship based on land or blood[78] . Since the inhabitants´ origin is irrelevant privatopia is not an application of *jus sanguinis*, but its structure and organization, together with the necessary economic conditions for moving there, guarantee a certain social homogeneity. It is a community of free choice. On the surface, it might look like community based on a shared area, but it lacks the heterogeneity and openness which have been typical of such areas. It is perhaps not far-fetched to see a search for purity as the other side of the search for security, an idea that may evoke questions related to us versus them, strangers within and around ourselves[79] .

Big monotonous housing areas for the less well-to-do can be seen in terms of a "reproduction of the masses", where personal individuality and the possibility to take a personal stance are lost: if everyone is like everyone else, public debate is disarmed before it has begun[80]. However, the same is probably true also for the affluent life in the CIDs. When individuality is based almost solely on choices which, however numerous, are identical to others' choices, it is certainly different in character from an individuality which includes the unwished-for and unexpected, and is ready to make compromises with given conditions.

In a discussion of contemporary housing, however superficial, the problems at the lower end of social reality must be noted. In most countries there is the challenge of low-income areas with high rates of unemployed, outlaws, foreigners. They stand outside the *polis*, but not by free choice, as the rich. In distinction to these, they may also be alienated from their own area, being only tenants without the possibility to influence the management of their habitat. One means to encourage a sense of belonging, suggested by Paul Chemetow, is to change the administrative structures of housing areas, to privatize management so that the relation of manager and managed becomes personal, rather than professional[81]. Another strategy is to encourage people to occupy the area where they live, to mark it with their own objects and signs - a strategy which, practiced without official tutelage, is mostly regarded as criminal[82].

The relation of person and place has mental as well as sensuous aspects. As has been stated earlier, the aesthetic includes thought-elements as well as sensuous ones, and an aesthetics of environment must therefore deal with both the substance and the frames of experience, which are interdependent. Depending on our relation to the environment we perceive differently, from different angles, but also more or less, in terms of both quantity and quality. In the discussion of urban common space in various functional areas, I shall continue to combine imperceptible, abstract threads with direct perception. But I would like to emphasize at this point that the interaction of mental frames and perception is more than a summation. Depending on our relation to the environment, and particularly on the level of engagement, we are not just prepared to perceive certain things but also to perceive with or without openness and generosity. Our frames and expectations are part of the perceptual process from its very start.

Two themes reappear in the following discussion of certain types of functional areas. One theme is the decrease of spaces for mere lingering, due to an increase in functionally defined space. One has to plan where to go more or less in advance, due to transportation and distances, and also plan one´s activities: in many places, we are either outsiders or insiders, depending on habitus, membership cards, home district, etc.[83] Purpose rather than aesthetic openness and curiosity then becomes dominant in our relation to the environment. A second theme is the increasing abstraction or decorporealization of environmental experience. There is less need to use one's body in moving through the city and, on the other hand, many of the spaces where one goes are crowded. These two tendencies together contribute to the irrelevance of the actual, concrete body as active and moving, on the one hand, and feeling and sensing, on the other. The body is not much engaged in locomotion or action, and as far as perception is concerned, a numbing of our senses is often called for by the aggressiveness, unpleasantness or sheer number of impulses[84].

"In the modern capitalized or socialized state, people die, give birth, are ill among strangers, with little dignity and according to procedures which they do not control", notes Andrea Nye[85]. This is generally true of care, less so of institutions of training and education. However, anonymity as facelessness is not only a question of social relations. The institutions themselves are often lacking in individuality, depersonalized, due in part to dull architecture, in part to the lack of a perceptible historical dimensions of both institution and site. When we visit such an institution we do not go to a particular place, an individual, characteristic environment; we go to get something done and do not expect anything more.

Synthetic building materials often have desensualizing effects on spaces considered as soundscape and tactile environment. Slick and hard surfaces are literally repellent in the sense that they do not receive but reject sounds, fluids, bodies. This hygienic and practical property also rejects the body: the wall or the floor remain cool and unaffected while the body, especially if it is sick or ageing, stands out more clearly as vulnerable. But the environment does not affirm and welcome vulnerability, it rather sets it apart and displays it as alien and abnormal. Another form of environmental abstraction is represented by automatically opening doors: again, the technique has its advantages, particularly for handicapped people, but it also means that the touch of my body and the building, energy, resistance and heaviness, are effaced from the situation[86].

The changing relations of body and environment include directly sensuous and symbolic aspects. The experiencer may not consciously pay attention to these, yet they are fundamental for the atmosphere of the building and for how it structures the relations of the human being and the institution she visits or frequents. The sensuous aspects are of particular importance in institutions related to care, where the visitor or client is often - by necessity - treated anonymously or semi-anonymously, while the services which the institution provides touch her in a most intimate and formative way. Feeling at ease in these spaces and situations is in part dependent on their sensuous and affective dimensions, on how we, as bodies, are addressed by the building, in a friendly or indifferent way. The building's experienced friendliness, warmth or rudity are not primarily relevant in terms of the expressive potential of a separate object: the building is inhabited space.

In the shopping environment, human relations differ from those typical of the institutions of care. Shopping and business are ideally pleasant activities, based on free choice: the shopper goes to look for something but may find something else, and will not buy anything unless satisfied[87]. Among pleasant environments for the purchase of things needed in daily life are old-fashioned markets and market halls, classical department stores, and shopping malls[88]. The charm of shopping is perhaps more due to the attraction of being among people, allowed to be seen and to observe others, with legitimate reasons for quick contacts, than to the attraction of goods. This social and playful aspect may, however, be part of the goods for sale too. When buying clothes, we reflect on how we want to appear to others, what roles we want to take on. But in a shopping environment such as that offered by *Ikea*, the originally Swedish, now worldwide furniture firm, the goods are not just incorporated in family life but form a family of its own. The objects are playfully animated through their naive and cheerful but absolutely unoffensive appearance, as well as their proper names, which often connote the sweetness of traditional country life seen through the spectacles of nostalgia.

This is one extreme of shopping: the pleasant, entertaining, easy-going, social part. It is the Sunday side of shopping, done by people during their free time. But the beginning of the development that finally produced the shopping mall - a civic urban place in itself - is the supermarket, and that end of contemporary shopping provides a rather poor experience[89]. The supermarket stands for the working day, when there is not much time but something should be brought home. Here buying had better be planned or it becomes random: in neither case are there the pleasures of choice and imagination - "do I want this one or that?" In selling and buying, there is less seduction: the customers must have certain things and the sellers know this: the activity of buying is subordinated to purpose and necessity.

Although a shopping environment may be pleasant because there are so many social impulses - this may make it unpleasant, too - another of its aspects is the emphasis on signs: a visuality of flat images competing with each other. The resulting visual cacophony is often amplified by auditive cacophony: jingles, announcements, conversations, so that one survival strategy is to close one's senses and adopt a "protective blank stare"[90]. A similar situation may be found on the street, if shopping predominates. These are the environments where Kristeva's observation on the disappearance of interiority seems most apt, for both human beings and buildings. Such tendencies are destructive also of the tectonic and tactile experience and reality of buildings[91].

But the urban environment is not simple, and so it is easily simplified. To see a commercial environment only in terms of business and advertisement is to neglect actual use and experience. Where street corners function as central urban places the urbanism of North America shows its human aspect: a focus on community, on ordinary life, rather than on hierarchic power structures[92]. Bars, restaurants, movie theatres and related spaces are functionally defined through leisure, relaxation and entertainment. Different tendencies can be spotted: on the one hand the making of contacts, the observation of and communication with other people and the display of oneself or of a smaller group in an anonymous, yet intimate atmosphere. That mobile phones are experienced as most disturbing in restaurants, sports events,

public transportation, on beaches and outdoor terraces indicates that proper to these areas is a lack of specified or external purpose, openness for fellow occupants of the space, leisure and freedom to simply be there[93].

On the other hand, there is a tendency of increasing specialization in worlds of entertainment. Disneyworld and Las Vegas are outstanding examples, but smaller-scale pleasure or entertainment oases fulfill a similar function[94]. Disneyworld is unreal and different from the everyday, yet safely familiar and unthreatening. Arnold Berleant points out that there are no clocks to be seen, and the "leisurely pace and serendipitous atmosphere keep one in a state of relaxed anticipation". The area is thoroughly planned and directed at consumerism, yet combines "subtle controls (...) with disarming gentleness". Disneyworld represents unquestioned beliefs: in technology, in the legitimacy of consuming, in the simplicity and innocence of human life. It pushes aside critical doubts and the sinister side of human existence, not to talk of politics, as efficiently as it keeps litter from sight. It is a heaven on earth, with all the triviality this notion implies.[95]

Planned, developed, commodified entertainment seems, paradoxically, to lose both its proper function in relation to the real and its separateness. In the "disintegration of reality", Berleant notes, "things are equally real and equally hollow"[96]. Our understanding of the real and the imagined is blurred. The spheres collapse and the refreshing, liberating and critical function of the imagined or possible world on the real is lost, for the creative interaction between thinking how things are and how they could be demands that they are basically, in principle, kept apart, in spite of interaction and of the difficulty, in concrete cases, to know which aspect belongs where.[97]

Las Vegas, with its small-scale replicas of world metropoles, its tamed strangeness, represents a similar development[98]. It is true that visitors may not confuse the hotel *Paris Las Vegas* with the city in France, but according to Las Vegas logic the latter should be called *Paris France*. The primacy of one as model for the other is questioned: why is Paris Las Vegas less authentic than Paris France?[99] Is York a model for New York, Zeeland a model for New Zealand? These senseless questions indicate something about the society of the spectacle, where simulacra are real in the sense that they effect human thinking and behaviour[100]. That behaviour is motivated through ideals and ideas is not new, but the production and fulfilment of wishes on a mass scale is. Why go to Paris when dream fulfilment is cheaper and safer in Las Vegas?

It is not a problem if people are less inclined to travel far: in the present ecological situation such a trend would be welcome. It is not that physical distances shrink, and they may not, for people gladly go far to get to their favourite dreamland. The problem is that our mental preparation for facing and confronting real strangeness, the unexpected, diminishes, as does the sense of distance, metaphorical and real. Artificial dreamworlds indicate that there is actually nothing very strange anywhere, either in your mind or in the universe: everything can be explained and illustrated, every monster mocked or shaken hands with. Through inauthenticity, rejection or fictionalization of history and real difference, built dreamworlds may corrupt the environment and the human mind alike[101]. Equal accessibility of everything means that we stand in no particular relation to anything: our position is lost. The manipulative taming of the fearful and unknown is a radical rejection of the really strange and threatening as it may confront us on streets or in districts of violence and crime. Getting used to the disarmed fairytale disarms our capabilities to deal with and understand monstrosity and cruelty. If the dreamworld left the real untouched it would be fairly harmless, but it does not; through denigration and distortion it makes it worse.

Dreamworlds may affect our capacity to orient ourselves in the world ethically and politically. I shall now look at orientation on a more concrete level, at the impact of modes of movement, transportation and travelling on orientation and experience of place.[102] That "mobility affects our very sense of place"[103] is true for any time, but especially important in a time which values communication as an end in itself. While the automobile city is an originally American phenomenon, it shares features in common with urban developments over the world[104].

Through motorized traffic, whether by private car or public transportation, the immediate interaction of body and environment is reduced to minimal movements of body and hands. These movements are also of a technical nature and demand little effort. The resistance of the world as matter against our body disappears from experience: resistance of distances, of harsh weather, of muddy ground, of steep slopes become in cars and elevators no more than a question of the time it takes to get to our destination. In these respects, the condition of our body does not matter: one does not arrive to the meeting perspiring from a run and with the taste of blood in one's mouth; stress is a phenomenon of the mind.[105] Pathways and access are abstracted. The city now becomes comparable to the net, where we move the mouse or push a button to enter a new pathway and choose our way from a menu of abstract signs. With less corporeal engagement, a body memory of the space and structure of the city is unlikely to develop, and there is less perceptual and emotional depth of places. As Sennett observes, many contemporary buildings have become sealed spaces where "one can in a few seconds rise far from the street and all it contains (...) it is possible for a passively moving body to lose all physical contact with the outside."[106]

In these respects there are, however, noteworthy differences between public transportation and cars, and also between different kinds of streets. A bus or tram which traverses a city of varied urban space may become a place of sense, a spine of the city as experienced, as important as and complementary to pedestrian experience but with a *stabilitas loci* of its own[107]. To know a shared urban space from the bus window is enriching, as is knowing it from the park bench, the walkway or from inside a building. In addition the bus route, through its repetitive permanence, approaches the permanence characteristic of place as locality. Public transportation also constitute social

space, although it is often not considered to be a space where human communication between strangers is appropriate. However, the sheer anonymous proximity of other people, of their breathing and smelling bodies, of their politeness or indifference as one makes one's way out constitutes a common space of confronting others. A reason to use or not use public transportation is one's willingness, curiosity or rejection to be among people who do not belong to one's chosen society[108]. Distanced but polite relations may develop among strangers who often see each other at the same time in the same place: bus, street corner, café. Such relations add to the human content of the place, its felt intimacy and individuality.

The difference between types of routes of transportation must also be noted. The subway experience differs from the tram, environmentally and socially. Where the former is more abstract, the stops being scarcely more than signs, in the latter each stop is part of the paradigmatic urban tissue. In the tram, the relationships between the people who get on and off and the locations in the city where they do this is more apparent. Moreover, observing the city through the tram window, mapping it in our minds, is inclusive of its social dimensions: we not only follow streets and look at buildings, but also note the behaviour and appearance of people. In a car, the relation to the urban tissue, social and built, depends on the kind of street we drive on. Highways are today often built as autonomous worlds, not unlike tunnels. From the roadside, they appear as separate objects rather than as parts of the surrounding landscape, and while they may protect the surroundings from noise, they also make abstract the experience of going from one place to another. Older country roads or urban streets are the opposite example, but the only way to protect their charm is to protect them from traffic. In addition to differences in the road itself, the aesthetics of driving naturally depends on the attitude of the driver: it may be appreciative of the landscape. But however well-intentioned a driver, the alienating effects of the private car on the experience of the environment is just as undeniable as its polluting effects.

The last type of contemporary common space I shall look at is electronic space, cyberspace, which has even been described as a replacement for physical social spaces[109]. Even if this prophecy is exaggerated, experience with virtual environments certainly influences our experience with the physical environment. It facilitates communicative activities that formerly had to be carried out slowly and concretely; it turns us away from the physical world, but may also turn us towards it. I shall first take up some arguments in praise of cyberspace, then return to the critical arguments and see what remains of them.

Electronic media represent a liberation of human activities from the restrictions set by real time and space. The scope and possibilities for asynchronous communication are radically enlarged when the same information is available on any logged-in computer screen[110]. One may agree with Wolfgang Welsch that "the new technology does not threaten, but increases the freedom and individuality of information"[111]. In addition to information, formerly available mainly in books or through personal teaching, the availability of art and entertainment, medicine, business and shopping increases, while work and learning processes free themselves from physical location[112]. It goes without saying that these areas appear differently in the net than in material reality, but they are not problematic in a disturbing way.

The effects of cyberspace on social relations are more ambivalent in character. As William J. Mitchell puts it, "[w]e have reinvented the human habitat": community is no longer connected to site[113]. The virtual graveyard is an illuminating example. The owner of *Aftercare* in Toronto, Douglas McCann, explains that since many people just strew the ashes of a deceased family member somewhere, they have no place to go to remember. Aftercare provides such a place in the net; a place that is, of course, immaterial and constructed through and through.[114] But even if family and friends gather at the virtual grave, they cannot feel the presence of each others' bodies.

Possibilities for personal communication certainly grow with the independence of geographical distances. Welsch shows that communication in a virtual community is not just cognitive, but also emotional in character: members of a virtual community may be willing to help each other also in matters of real life, and eager to meet[115]. These perspectives are interesting and encouraging. But even if the net offers opportunities for new forms of social bonding, these may be accompanied by a turning away from the actual dwelling-place and the neighbour nextdoor. However, one can ask whether alienation and placelessness are side-effects of electronic media, or whether the reverse is true, as Welsch suggests: people turn to electronic media because there is so little public and social space in material reality[116]. The problem is then one of democracy, planning and building as much as of the impact of the media.

The abstraction of perception and experience means that they are dominated by recognition rather than by aesthetic sensibility. This tendency, which affects our relations to place and to society, probably has no one cause. What we deal with is, rather, a bundle of practices, of habits of knowing and doing things, which are interrelated and tend to enforce each other. The rule of technology, pointed out by Heidegger and which today is even more dominant than it was in his time, is not the rule of anyone in particular, nor is it, as Hubert Dreyfus points out, just a rational choice, in which case it could be more easily refuted. The technical, managing attitude is one in which we stand, which constitutes our standing; it is not before us, but is our ground and an intimate part of the near history. But this does not mean that we are snared in it without a chance for change.[117]

Technology is not just a question of practices and knowledge, it is also a question of perception, understood broadly. Therefore, the margins where change might become rooted can be sought also outside the field of activities, thus not only in cultivating friendship, hiking or drinking wine, but in leaning back into the micro-margins of work or other activities mostly

dominated by efficiency[118]. At this point, I shall only point once more to how the sensuous margins of existence are occupied by technological rationality and abstraction. The abstraction of perception caused by fast travelling and detached transportation has been noted: a tendency where environmental details and the density of place become practically imperceptible and cease to exist for us. But the abstraction of perception affects - or, rather, leaves untouched - the body as well as the environment. "As body awareness withers, space becomes immaterial: as we retreat into the privacy of our media-altered realms, direct experience of the city disappears"[119]. This warning may be exaggerated, but is not unfounded. One consequence of the abstraction of environmental experience may be that vision increasingly dominates over other senses and tones down the synaesthetic, full character of things and bodies which appear multisensuously to perceiving bodies. The detached, autonomous image is one aspect of a de-individualization of the objects of perception, which affects the moving as much as the static image. Deleuze's "any-space-whatever", a cinematic space cut off from the continuity of narrative and place, where "'time is out of joint and presents itself in the pure state", characterizes an abstracted experience of the built environment as well[120].

The decline or destruction of experience must not be taken as a claim pertinent to all experience[121]. However, it points to tendencies of alienation, detachment and selflessness which it would be foolhardy to deny and unwise to leave unreflected. The experience of place, of community, of body and personal identity are all involved and interrelated in these processes. Thus social existence and animal existence influence each other: how I am framed and presented as a member of society is dependent upon how I am framed and presented as a finite being. Welsch importantly points to the revalidation of ordinary, sensuous experience as a countertendency to the experience of cyberspace[122]. But if there is a mutual dependency between our life in social and our life in sensuous reality, a revalidation of natural beauty does not take us far. The Californian sunset, admired from a favourite spot, is certainly a breathtaking sight, but how relevant is it to everyday life?[123]

The question with which I began the discussion of common spaces was whether we find, in contemporary building, something for us, or only the projective identification of the architect. This question is not just about construction and design, but also about ways of relating to the environment, of perception, of experience. If among buildings or in nature we only pick out what we recognize as gorgeous, meaningful and valuable, is not that "a symptom of a culture (...) that is a culture of escape"?[124] Are there spaces, areas and sites that are not defined, and do we need such spaces? This question opens up in two directions: one about the possibility of shared but undefined space; the other about nature. I shall discuss them in the next chapter, but before that make some observations on the management of nature in contemporary building.

Management of nature

> *TV nature is "world-class" nature: all whales, warthogs and wombats. (...) The homeless, domineering human spirit that has caused all modern environmental problems also, sadly, underlies our preoccupation with exotic nature.*[125]

These words by David Ehrenfeld, a biologist and ecologist, describe a paradox characteristic of the relation to nature among concerned and benevolent urban citizens of many Western countries. Awareness of pollution, of the extinction of species, of climate changes is often accompanied by an idealization of nature where the ideal is nature untouched by man - a counter-image to exploitation. Such attitudes should not be rejected, but looked upon in a critical spirit. In all versions of planning, building and dwelling there is necessarily utilization of and interaction with non-human nature, even the use of force and violence towards it. On the other hand, reactions of concern, anxiety, even alarm at the present mass-scale exploitation of nature and its irreversible consequences on land forms, biotopes and climate are well-founded. However, the establishment of a viable connection between human and non-human forms of life is of prime importance, rather than the illusory rejection of utilization as such.

Observing the contemporary management of nature, it appears that detachment and disengagement from nature is connected to certain ways of life as both cause and effect. The domineering spirit cannot - particularly when we look at the management of nature on a local level - be considered a problem only of thinking, of philosophical traditions and ideology. This spirit is not a problem on the higher levels of decision-making and planning alone, although it is more consequential there, but also a problem of and in everyday life, for example in the private household, where patterns of consumption are rooted. But it is not my aim to replace the idea of a domineering spirit with one of domineering practices. The point is to see these as radically interdependent, without collapsing them into each other. Radical interdependence means that thinking is influenced by practices and practices by thinking: influence is inevitable, but does not fully determine its object.

Contemporary urban citizens are largely alienated from agricultural practices, relating to the supply of food, clothes, housewares, building materials, water and energy. We relate to these areas of life through an abstract understanding, knowing *that* but not *how*. This knowledge is rooted in and routed into thought patterns, schemes and models originating in the technical and social sciences and mediated in newspapers and public discussion. The accompanying images are of sewage systems or power stations rather than wells or woodsheds, forests or springs. Production is elsewhere not just in a geographical sense, but also as disconnected from one's personal life. With the risk of a slight exaggeration: the idea that one of us urban dwellers could practically interact with the natural environment, personally and concretely, with one's body and for a purpose other than leisure, is strange and

remains unthought[126]. Those who interact with nature belong to another, exotic life, outside our sphere of normality.

One result of detached thinking and detached ways of life is that nature's "proper role and appreciation [remains] exiled from the cognitive and practico-ethical realms", to borrow a diagnosis of how art is handled in the modern tradition[127]. In a like manner, nature is simultaneously valued and devalued: the effective evaluation of nature in society decreases at the same time that individuals worship it and give it a special place in their lives. The repression and rejection of the dependence of humans on nature, which includes not only the violence of utilization but also the vulnerability of all living things and which permeates all levels and dimensions of existence from our personal bodies to the societies and regions we inhabit, is the other side of the adoration of nature.

In the following, I shall substantiate the analysis of contemporary attitudes and practices above by pointing to trends and concrete examples. They are grouped as they relate to the planning and use of green areas, to housing and dwelling in the immediate habitat and, finally, to travelling and leisure. These illustrations of the management of nature concern different aspects and levels of practices which together mould the experienced, urban environment and which also represent different geographical areas. Not all of them point in the same direction; while some confirm, others break the habits of detachment.

Before proceeding it must be noted that nature, even in this context, is not one[128]. Let me point, without going into detail, to the two broad semantic fields which are most relevant. The first and most concrete, evident and apparent meaning of nature, particularly in relation to the built environment, is what Spinoza called created nature, *natura naturata*, comprising perceptible phenomena such as land forms, plants and animals. In this perspective, the nature of a city consists of green areas, topography, trees, birds, animals. Although human beings are part of created nature, we are mostly not included in discussions of urban nature. However, an important aspect of experiencing nature is connecting to it in various ways, and I shall point to some of these. Second, nature may be understood as creative nature, the generating force, Spinoza's *natura naturans*. Perhaps less evidently, nature in this sense is equally relevant in a discussion of the experience of an environment. Nature is not present in the habitat only as objects, items or areas, but also as forces, cycles and processes which are both global and local. Helsinki has, for example, not only its proper November slush but also the unreal and gracious blue shadows of low yellow sun on snow-covered ground in mid-winter. As *natura naturans*, nature is simultaneously global, regional and local, which gives it a particular significance. Locality establishes a connection of created and creative nature and a specific perspective on the management of the natural environment: in some places we have nature as authentic locality, in others as decorative objects.

To start the illustrations with the planning and management of green areas is to start at the most encompassing, but also the most general level. It is, however, central and representative of the contemporary situation. The preservation and conservation of chosen areas is a strategy adopted by international and national environmental organizations, and is probably necessary. But as all strategies, it has side-effects which are all the more consequential if they go unnoticed. In the case of preservation areas, some of these effects seem to be straightforwardly counterproductive. When an area is given the status of a preservation area this often produces an increase in traffic and business - roads, service stations, cafés, motels and hotels - so that while aiming at preservation, the elevation of the area's status increases wear by making the area a desired object of experience industry. The phenomenon is well-known and difficult to avoid unless one is willing to reduce the visitors' level of comfort. The establishing of preservation areas is also related to a pattern of thinking which posits nature as being out there: a perspective which is anthropocentric in its separation of humans and nature.

Further, national or transnational preservation programmes may give rise to the feeling that the nature question is now settled. This is related to abstract, technological thinking which sees all values as quantifiable. For example, the aim of the Natura programme of the European Union to protect a certain percentage of the areas of all the member states exemplifies an abstract approach to nature and natural value, handled as a resource. This is at least the way the programme has been interpreted by some affected parties, for example the Helsinki municipal authorities, who wanted to exclude one area, rich in bird-life, from the programme on the basis that a new harbour is planned for that area[129]. If the main point is a certain amount of land, another area would do. Thus economic and technical considerations are automatically given priority[130]. But preserving nature, and especially from the aesthetic perspective, is not just a question of preserving a certain amount of land or a number of species. Nature is also locality. Therefore, there is reason to attend to the individual worth of places and not only to their generalizable value.[131]

In a city, nature is most apparently displayed and present in parks[132]. The aspect of nature on display is most evident in botanical gardens, but although these offer a scientific, classifying perspective, we must note that biology in this context is a very concrete and aesthetically tinted field of knowing[133]. The experience of visiting a botanical garden is often one of intimacy with the plants, of presence to birdsong, trees, leaves of grass and other species. It is not the totalizing attitude of having a truth presented to one but, rather, of bowing in the face of nature's abundance. By looking at the city plan, we can conclude that nature is displayed and made into an urban presence through the park, but when we enter the park an intimate mode of experience takes over. This is true of any large urban park - Central Park in New York, or the parks of central London - where the sounds and rhythms of urban life are subdued and a different time takes over. The park is a lung of the city not just because it provides oxygen, but also because it serves as a breathing space and a zone of rest. In Paris the park around *La Villette*, dominated by large open greens, creates the impression of rest and freedom by different means. Here, as in New York and London, the relation of surrounding urban tissue and park is important: the park must be big enough in order to be able to offer a counter-space of some integrity, as compared to neighbouring buildings and noise.

In another example from Paris, a green area is handled as a decorative element, but without relation to earth or land, or to the site as a particular given rather than as mere material. This is the garden, also called the "fragment of forest" of the *Bibliothêque de France*[134]. The garden is planted with trees, thus park-like, and placed as an immersed rectangle in the midst of the building complex, open to the sky but invisible from the street, and glassed-in from the sides, where it is surrounded by reading spaces. Similarly to a zen garden, this space is meant to be looked at, contemplated from a distance rather than visited[135]. In the library, there is a "regeneration of the cultural design of the place", but in this context 'place' refers only to the institution[136]. For there is also a detachment from the place considered as land and natural site, which is only emphasized by the natural elements of the project. The garden is more like a potted plant than a park, and whatever symbolism of rootedness and ascendancy - earth and heaven - there is to a tree, the trees here function as abstract symbols, for they cannot embody and enact the connection of earth-ground and sun-energy in its opaque givenness and temporal depth[137]. The problem is not that the roots of the trees have no soil, for they do, but that land was first abstracted into a building site, whereby the temporal continuity and integrity of the site as given was eradicated[138]. This is stated very clearly by the whole project, which displays itself as an autonomous, self-supporting form.

In the small, inserted park-like spaces of New York City, trees are also potted and never grow high. Still they offer significant breathing spaces between the high-rise buildings, a minimal human-to-nature or human-to-human intimacy, as when one shares a bench and the smell and sounds of two separate meals under the umbrella of a tree, one's back diagonally towards an other's. In these green spaces, there is a vitality and connectedness to human life that makes them into something more than mere decoration: the trees assert themselves against and despite the odds, enjoying a life which is short but not without dignity.

The potted trees of New York City lack a relation to the earth, the ground; the green spaces they create are certainly of a different kind than those of Central Park. Still they are not disconnected from the urban tissue and from the vital cycles of the city, which importantly include *homo sapiens*. In this respect, these potted trees differ from the bushes which grow inside rectangular iron cages on the terrace level of *Bibliothéque de France*[139]. In the latter case, we get near to the plant and could touch it; yet the iron cage states the separateness of plant and human being and suggests that touching is not expected. The iron cage may also be seen as a protection of plants against humans. In either way, it is a statement of distrust, evoking sadness that life in the open, without technological protection and support, is impossible. The caged bushes could also be compared to another project of the architect, Dominique Perrault: a proposal for a Danish exhibition on allotments in 1996, where architects from different countries where invited[140]. Perrault proposed a solitary tree surrounded by glass walls: the ground untouched, but with a ladder against one of the walls, so that it would be possibly to climb inside and visit the tree. In a context of allotments, especially in a Nordic country where they have normally been used for growing flowers or vegetables, the solitary tree appears strangely humanized and therefore incarcerated. The project gives expression to an alienation which is all the more tragic since it is symptomatic of contemporary human attitudes towards nature and practices of exploitation.

In my discussion of common spaces, I noted the handling of topography, as well as of scale and materials, in contemporary building practices. These are significant for both the social relations and the relations to nature which they expose and affirm. The abstracted handling of topography and site exposes a blindness towards the individuality of a natural site, considered as a result of an unending and complicated series of processes. Similarly, buildings that out-scale the human being as a body of a certain size and certain capacities for locomotion also tend to out-scale the natural environment. Finally, the more artificial or synthetic the building materials, the less they expose connections and analogies to the materials of the natural environment - or the body - and the more abstractly the buildings react to climatic wear and tear.

If buildings and areas already in their natural dimension are relevant for the social dimension of urban life, urban life - the ways in which we inhabit the city - is also relevant for how nature appears to us. In a city the relation of society to nature is not just a question of planning green areas, but includes conditions for living, transportation, professional and household work, as well as social and leisure activities. I shall now make some observations on this performative dimension of contemporary urban life.

It is evident that contemporary transportation systems, in all versions, represent a distancing from the natural environment, but there are differences in degree among them[141]. Shared features are the passivity of the passenger who is passed on rather than making a passage and the literal detachment from outdoor space through encagement in a vehicle. To be sure, there are differences and specifications - the interaction of driver and environment, the possibility to let in outdoor air - but these are minor. One overall consequence of transportation is that the capacities of the body, as relative to the natural environment, are downplayed. The powers of limbs, the protection of the body against the weather with clothes, the assessment of the time it takes to traverse a distance on foot, in general the scaling of the environment through the use of one's body; all these become irrelevant in an environment where moving from one place to another is mostly about

entering and leaving transportation spaces and vehicles. To make one's passage from a point of departure to a destination by using underground transportation is to descend and ascend with moving staircases and stairs in walled-in corridors where letters, numbers and arrows tell us where to go, to enter the wagon and after a passage in darkness walk out, again through corridors and stairs, and suddenly find oneself at another location, hopefully where one wanted to go. The route is disconnected from the spatial layout of the city at ground level, and only distantly related to that scale of distances. Urban lines of traverse and mental maps of a subway system constitute a spatial structure that is fairly autonomous from that of the ground level[142]. Further, to make the passage through a transportation system is to use one's body for moving through this particular system rather than through the city, if we think of a city's ground-level spatial layout - as indicated on a map - as its backbone, and topography, buildings and streets as its flesh and blood. Even if the transportation systems question this conception, the ground-level and outdoor image is still dominant in the identification and public presentation of most cities, and the more so the richer the city is aesthetically. Could the *métro* ever outdo Parisian air, dazzling facades, monumental open places, a river, smells and fragrances, voices and footsteps? The question remains rhetorical.

Underground transportation is the form of urban transportation where detachment from the natural environment as land and climate is most evident, to the point, even, of autonomy. It is worth noting that there is both a performative and a representational aspect of this detachment, the former pointing to how we move or are moved, irrespective of natural obstacles, the latter to how vehicles, roads or rails appear and present themselves - or fail to do it - as part of the environment. The underground system is mostly invisible from the ground, and thus it is neutral in terms of representing or stating a relation of human built structures to natural environment. In distinction, the expressways, tunnels and bridges which dominate many urban and semi-urban environments are quite explicit in their statement of the separateness of the structure from the surrounding land. Similar to performative detachment, which makes travelling smooth and easy, representational detachment has positive sides to it. Noise protection and high embankments shield adjacent areas from discharges, but they also cut the relation of road and land.

Also in dwellings and housing, the representational and the performative aspects of the relation of human culture to non-human nature are pertinent and often interact. The scale, materials, even the shape of a building have both performative and representational aspects: the height of the building decides the need of elevators, while materials, roof form and facade influence the energy consumption.[143]

The appearance of the building is a presentation of conditions for dwelling, but it is also a presentation of an object which in itself looks more or less related to its proper site and in general to nature. Natural materials, like stone or wood, are literally close to nature, but also such non-natural materials as tile, concrete or plaster may in their texture display similar qualities, for example a sensitivity to changes in light and humidity, which make them appear as alive[144]. A rough surface recalls the irregularity of natural materials and catches light more sensitively than an even surface. The tile, for its part, is familiar to us as a product of human mechanical labour, and this intimacy with the body also implies a relation to nature[145]. More natural, less artificial materials - distinctions made along a continuous scale - are more manageable, both cognitively and practically. The wooden beam can be burnt and returned to nature, if not recycled in other ways. With concrete, the origin of the material is not evident and its handling as waste is more complicated.

Any apartment building or house constitutes or is part of an ecosystem, including energy, fresh water, sewage and waste disposal. In most urban areas, these relations to the natural environment are, however, imperceptible. The choices an individual can make in terms of his own patterns of consumption are marginal, at least they appear so, for even assorted garbage is taken away to some distant place. Large-scale agglomerations are necessarily accompanied by abstraction in our relation to nature. But if problems of pollution or decrease of biodiversity as a consequence of land use accompanies such housing, the garden city is not automatically a solution: it may be even more demanding in terms of energy and land use.

However, a garden city or an ecological housing area which includes individual garden lots offers possibilities for active and concrete reconnection with nature through the cultivation of soil and plants. Mostly the presence of natural areas and elements in an urban environment offers only contemplative reconnection: walks at the waterfront or under the trees with the sounds and smells of waves, birds and ground. The provision of outdoor activities and spaces is significant not only in a health perspective. If to go jogging or walking is a way of getting exercise and fresh air, fresh air has qualities which cannot be compensated by an artificial intake of oxygen. As noted at several points, moving through an environment is a richly interactive experience which takes place at several levels of perception.

Compared to walking or jogging, it may be more difficult in a contemporary city to find spaces which provide the opportunity for absentminded lingering, for just being outside, possibly in the company of others, but without necessarily communicating. It is here that the fenced-in park or botanical garden finds its *raîson d'+tre*; the fence guarantees the peace of the park, the atmosphere of anonymity and equality, the silent sharing of shades, sounds and smells. Paradoxically, the fence is then a sign of freedom. The provision of shared, undefined spaces would be especially important for people with time and curiosity for observing or just immersing themselves in life as it takes it course naturally, as if by itself, in nature or in a human habitat. These people might be found among elderly, children or unemployed, but also generally among those whose time is not filled up with duties,

organized appointments and hobbies. However, it is my impression that such spaces become more rare the more planning takes command. A park is not allowed to remain a park, but must be used more efficiently, divided into sports grounds, play areas, dog areas, fragmented by a planner's ingenuity.

One does not have to be Tom Sawyer to know that children have a natural affinity for waste areas. The unplanned, uncontrolled and contingent exercises a charm on many adults too, an attraction which runs counter to society and power, but which does not typically end in revolutions. But that requires that there are outlets and breathing spaces. Coming home at night, or looking out at the park beneath my window at dogs and their owners, it comes to my mind that the animals we bring into our apartments and which take us out - if not always literally, then at least metaphorically - give us such space. In addition, they may offer the possibility for a playful sniffing at others, meeting and parting.

Travelling has become a major and integrated part of everyday life for people in affluent societies. "Rest for us, a vacation, means going away."[146] To go away for one week or two in midwinter, to travel to the sun is part of the annual rituals of many people in northern countries. This means that one does not inhabit one's city only, but also an airplane and a destination, and much in the same, familiar way[147]. This is also true of travels related to work. The import of this part of life for the relation of humans to nature goes in two directions. One comprises the individuality of place and region, and particularly how it is moulded by the natural conditions. In Finland, our increasing personal independence of climatic factors, such as the long, dark winter, is part of the change of our relation to nature from more serious and integrated into more playful and hedonistic. Darkness becomes a background for artificial light, and if snow does not come or stay in the winter, it can be produced and maintained by technological means. Examples here are the "Festival of Light" and the "City of Snow", both recent winter phenomena of Helsinki, a city where changes in the global climate might have the effect of changing the midwinter months from white and dry to grey and wet. These examples thus show the other way in which increased travelling is a factor in the changing relations of humans to nature: the direct, physical impact of pollution on the climate. Travelling, particularly in its dominant, airborne mode, is consumption of nature, however contemplative the intentions are.

To conclude this sketch, there are trends of symbolization and musealization of nature and a blurring of artificiality and authenticity of region and place - but also spaces and possibilities for reconnection with nature which I shall elaborate on in the next chapter. The objectifying tendency includes a real and experienced detachment of human beings and nature in richer countries and urban areas, a rejection of interaction and a blindness towards the indirect or marginalized forms of exploitation which go on elsewhere at an increasing pace. Symbolization does not mean that an urban citizen, who is both alienated from nature and worships it, does not give it a profound meaning. The affirmation of nature's symbolic importance, rather, comes hand in hand with a rejection or blindness towards its material, irreducible and un-in-formed reality which is attached to region and locality, but not necessarily apparent as a character of place.

As Paul Virilio points out, natural objects are subordinated to relative duration and seasonal cycles, aging, growing, withering, wear, and this also used to be true of artefacts. But the consequences of contemporary advanced technology, such as pollution, tend to be long-term and irreversible, and they seem to exceed our capacities of control and prediction. Complexity and expansion of the processes also decrease the possibilities for any individual to take responsibility for or influence the systems[148]. Finally, claims Virilio, this development transforms our relation to time itself:

> *phenomena that take place* here, *in the common space, no longer take place* now *in the common time, but in an* ***outside-time*** *over which no-one has power, despite the tragic illusion of information. (...)*
>
> ***The beyond is no longer of a territory, of a political space around which it would be appropriate to build ramparts, it is of real time, of a specifically human space-time,*** *from which we progressively exile ourselves.*[149]

The specifically human space-time is related to and part of place as a natural and cultural, given and cultivated locality. Both notions require that limits and finitude are acknowledged; limits not in the sense of unsurpassable or defined borders, but in the sense of a fundamental boundary, which also circumscribes the only possible arena for human action. To act requires a place from which and where to act. In this perspective, the "decisive split between land and building"[150] is symptomatic of a profound alienation from nature, in addition to the alienation from history which has been pointed to as characteristic of the modern movement[151]. A site is more than and different from a sight. To be alienated from nature as ground, locality and *natura naturans* is to miss the opacity of our situation, an opacity that characterizes our cultural-historical situation as well. There is always more than we know, more than we can keep in mind at any one moment, additional angles and experiences swallowed by time. Our dwelling in the natural dimension is not so different from our dwelling in the cultural.

Notes

[1] Hepburn 1984, 181.

[2] Rolston 1994, 192-197.

[3] Merleau-Ponty 1995/1969, 123.

[4] Merleau-Ponty 1995/1969, 163.

[5] Kant 1990/1790, 39-40 (par. 1).

[6] Compare for a discussion of the relevance of the existence of the object for aesthetic

appreciation, Hargrove 1989, 165-205.

[7] Note Richard Sennett's vehement criticism of the use of value terms: "The phrases 'social values' and 'value systems' are barbarisms the social sciences have inflicted on ordinary language. I confess I have never understood what 'a value' is. It is not a thing. If it is part of the language by which people rationalize their social world, then it should be treated as a part of ideology. If 'a value' is a 'prized idea', then the term is a complete mess. 'Liberty' and 'justice' are prized ideas which mean different things to different people at different times; to call them social values per se gives no clue as to the grounds on which they are valued." Sennett 1993/1977, 34.

[8] Thus, unless the aesthetic value of an artefact is influenced by its function, aesthetics and propaganda become hard to distinguish; compare, on aletheic experience, chapter two, first section, third subsection.

[9] Compare chapter four, first section.

[10] Arendt 1958, 163-167, also 307.

[11] Think only of the efficiency of personal humiliation, torture or pain, for example as described by George Orwell in *1984*, or of idols such as Princess Diana and Jacqueline Kennedy. These are more efficient instruments of power than written law.

[12] Arendt 1958, 22-78; compare Nye 1994, 135.

[13] Arendt 1958, 8.

[14] Kristeva 1993, 49.

[15] Kristeva 1993, 72-73. She also suggests that in the contemporary city, psychoanalysis could provide or help people to create such spaces.

[16] Arendt 1958, 70-71, points out the political disadvantages of such a situation, see also chapter seven, first section.

[17] Compare Boyer 1994, 1-11, 32-33, 480-494 or 1996, 11, 184-239.

[18] Heidegger 1972, 32-33; Wittgenstein 1987/1977, 134; Loos 1985, 108; Frank 1995, 18; Bataille 1997a, 21.

[19] I have discussed this briefly in von Bonsdorff 1995.

[20] For example, Boyer 1994, 211-229; Frampton 1985b/1983, 19 and 1995, 380-382.

[21] Compare Gregotti 1996, 98-99, and Handke 1987, 23-25.

[22] Arendt 1958, 38-49.

[23] Compare the policies and aims of the European Union, by no means alone in this kind of thinking.

[24] Arendt 1958, 71, and Nye 1994, 169-174. Also Casey 1993, 22-39, emphasizes the interdependence of person and place, but his notion of place relies on the implaced body and gives no special attention to property. On placelessness, see Relph 1986/1976, 79-121.

[25] In distinction to semi-public, community areas, such as housing.

[26] This is the sense of symbol that Heidegger draws on in the essay on the work of art; Heidegger 1972, 9-10.

[27] On fictional fear compare, for example, Carroll 1987.

[28] For example, Antti Vahtera describes the World Trade Organization as "developing into a kind of economic world government", *Helsingin Sanomat*, 22 November 1997. Compare also Martin and Schumann 1997.

[29] One can read both Heidegger 1949/1927 and Foucault 1966 in this critical light.

[30] Legibility is important in such classic studies of the urban experience as Lynch 1968/1960 or Venturi, Scott Brown and Izenour 1978.

[31] The complexes of the European Union in Brussels and Strasbourg could perhaps be mentioned as examples of big building projects related to civic power. On the other hand, the EU was and is primarily a project of economic power and consolidation: a vision of the good life does not steer the project, but is rather supposed to be the consequence of economic development.

[32] A possible fourth area, suggested by Ronald W. Hepburn, comprises structures which serve the production and distribution of energy. However, although the

investment of economic value in these is considerable, the investment of symbolic value - at least at present and in the West - may be smaller as compared to the other areas.

[33] *New York City* 1994, 60. The WFC was designed by Cesar Pelli and Associates. I have retained the spelling of the original text.

[34] One need not walk far to see a huge advertisement of toothpaste on the opposite side of the river. This somehow diminishes the effect of the lavish buildings.

[35] Compare Levinas' distinction of need and desire, referred to in chapter two, first section, second subsection.

[36] Originally, John D. Rockefeller Jr. planned an opera house on the site. He was in general a philantropist patron who importantly contributed, among other projects, to the United Nations Headquarters; *New York City* 1994, 37.

[37] Compare Gregotti 1996, 76.

[38] One thinks of forest developments in Thailand, Indonesia or Brazil, of oil in Nigeria, or of Siberia: in all these cases resource management has often irreparably destroyed local cultures and environments.

[39] For a radically critical perspective on the museum, see Bataille 1997b; compare Hollier 1989.

[40] Planned by Richard Rogers and Renzo Piano, and Dominique Perrault respectively. The scope of the series of Grand works is dependent on perspective; an official publication of 1992 includes fourteen projects of the 1980s, from the art museum at Orsay to three projects outside Paris; *Grands Travaux* 1992.

[41] Lyotard 1985/1979, 54-62.

[42] Mitterrand 1992.

[43] Compare Frampton 1985a, 285.

[44] Thus Paul Valéry: "our particularity (and, sometimes, our ridicule, but most of the time our most beautiful designation), is that we think, or feel, that we are universal - I want to say: *men of the universe*... Observe the paradox: to have as one's specialty the sense of the universal.", quoted by Derrida 1991, 73. In the same text Derrida describes the European spirit as transgressive, thus both inclusive and tolerant of difference, and defends the duty to open Europe, to always go further and change things. This simultaneously self-critical and self-amused attitude is, to my mind, a french virtue – which is not to deny that universalism in practise may appear in as ironic light.

[45] Compare Biasini 1992.

[46] Picon-Lefebvre 1992, 46.

[47] This is typically the problem of many high-rise housing areas; compare the next section in this chapter.

[48] From my own notes, 1st August 1993.

[49] Kant 1990/1790, 91-105 (par. 25-27).

[50] Contal 1992b.

[51] Christian de Portzamparc, architect of the *Cité de la Musique*, quoted in Contal 1992a, 60.

[52] Jodidio 1992, 35.

[53] Compare Komar and Melamid 1994, 9.

[54] Compare Gregotti 1996, 66.

[55] Its history is described in an article in *Ny Tid*, 19th September 1997, referring to Ryszard Kapuscinski's book *The Imperium*. I cannot refrain from citing a recent view from the hotel *Moskva*: "From the gallery a memorable view opens of Moscow, with the intended Palace of the Soviets unexpectedly replaced by a New Church of Christ the Saviour. The latter was blown up in 1931 to make room for the loftiest building on the planet - the Palace of Soviets. This is how we live. It may be presumed that the 'new Bolsheviks' now elbowing their way to power will save the trouble of blasting the church, but will simply build a new Palace of Soviets on its walls. Not a bad idea at all! *Stolichnaya Vodka*, however, has survived all changes of power in Russia and continues to taste good also in the future.", Kozak 1997.

[56] Gregotti 1996, 32, points to "an obsession with safety as an aspect of conservation".

[57] This news was reported in Bagdad papers on December 9th, 1997, according to the AP and published in the Finnish *Hufvudstadsbladet* the following day. This connection is evident in Tsarist Russia and in Stalin's time: the ruler was called Little father in a way reminiscent of church fathers, even taking priority over them. Clearly, a church could not stand in Moscow during Stalin's rule.

[58] Also Adolf Hitler took advantage of the idea of a unity of ruler and people, where the *Führer* both embodies the people and gives shape to it as an artist does to his material; Karlsson and Ruth 1983, 34-40, 107-124. Needless to say, in such a perspective democracy is not necessary.

[59] Compare Boyer 1996, 219-220.

[60] See Ballard 1995/1973 for a provoking account of the highway and airport environment as natural in this sense.

[61] Both of these measures are increasingly used by the Finnish road planning authorities.

[62] The Finnish part of the road is estimated to cost 6 080 million Finnish marks, *Helsingin Sanomat*, November 22, 1997.

[63] On these phenomena, see, for example, Olwig 1991 and Boyer 1996, 33.

[64] Virilio 1996, 79, 83; compare Boyer 1996, 11.

[65] Hugo 1993/1831, 183-198 (book 5, end of chapter 1 and chapter 2). With the book, says Hugo, thought "passes from duration to immortality", 192.

[66] Hugo 1993/1831, 184-185.

[67] Mitchell 1995, 47.

[68] The credo can be traced to the vitalistic thinking of the nineteenth century, to Horatio Greenough, for example, who understands "Beauty as the promise of Function" and points to animal and human beauty as examples; Greenough 1969, 71, 117-121.

[69] Aldo Gargani, quoted in Gregotti 1996, 39.

[70] Compare Relph 1986/1976, 87-89.

[71] Gregotti 1996, 3.

[72] Boyer 1996, 11; see also 138-175.

[73] Gregotti 1996, 75-82; Relph 1986/1976, 79-121.

[74] With Casey, one could say that we build on site rather than with place, provided that site is understood as an abstract opposite of concrete place; compare Casey 1993, xiii, 65, 141.

[75] Alvar Aalto once argued that closeness and common scale of buildings and trees increases the quality of life but is also better from the point of view of the use of energy; Aalto 1946.

[76] Boyer 1996, 152.

[77] Boyer 1996, 151, referring to a report by Evan McKenzie in *The Progressive*, October 1993. The most prosperous region is Cobb County in Georgia, described by Boyer as an economically successful and extremely selfish region; *ibid.*, 152-153. As fictions which, although exaggerated, suggest a great deal about life in such areas, I recommend Nadine Gordimer, 'Once Upon a Time' in the collection *Jump* (1991) and J.G. Ballard, *Running Wild* (1997/1988).

[78] For example, Kristeva 1989/1988, 139-140.

[79] Compare Kristeva 1989/1988.

[80] The expression comes originally from Walter Benjamin (in *Illuminations*); it is quoted and discussed by Hewitt 1993, 167 and Boyer 1996, 123.

[81] Chemetov 1996, 67-69; compare 37.

[82] I am thinking of tags, graffiti etc., aware that there are more perspectives on these than can be discussed here. For examples of projects where art has been used interactively to activate and encourage people, see Willats 1982.

[83] In Helsinki, the first question on a first-aid station is now "Your postal code?" If

the area does not belong to that hospital, and one is not about to die, one has to find the correct place. The "home" hospital system does not necessarily result in a friendly feeling.

[84] See Welsch 1996, 57 (in English 1997, 25).

[85] Nye 1994, 172.

[86] On the importance of resistance and material reality, see Sartwell 1996 or Sennett 1996/1994, 355-376.

[87] I overlook phenomena such as compulsive shopping, as well as the fact that most people cannot afford to shop freely. But probably a similar enjoyment is typical of shopping among richer and poorer people.

[88] Compare the observations in chapter four, fifth section.

[89] Rybczynski 1995, 201-217, describes the development. In his account - perhaps in part because he describes the North American situation - the Sunday side is predominant.

[90] Boyer 1996, 85, referring to experiences of World War I and to Walter Benjamin's notion of shock.

[91] On the tactile and the tectonic, see Frampton 1985b/1983 and 1995, and Boyer 1996, 83-86.

[92] Rybczynski 1995, 27.

[93] *Helsingin Sanomat*, January 24, 1998. The reported survey was made in France.

[94] Ikea has successfully applied the dreamworld concept in selling *homes*: furniture like family members, experiences, cozyness, stories, and similar extras that might be lacking from the customer's own life.

[95] Berleant 1997, 44, 47, 50; he also describes Disneyworld as the "the desublimation of the sublime", 54.

[96] Berleant 1997, 53.

[97] That very difficulty creates the necessity and opportunity to ponder in earnest the relation of the two, which is an essential value of art and fiction. Compare Lasch 1979, 181-219, on the degradation of sport when it is no longer taken as play; or Paul Feyerabend's observation that "we need a dream-world in order to discover the features of the real world we think we inhabit", Feyerabend 1994/1993, 22.

[98] See Huxtable 1998.

[99] As Berleant notes, "the immediacy of one´s present location is inevitably the most forceful"; Berleant 1997, 53.

[100] See Baudrillard 1981.

[101] Berleant 1997, 48; compare, on inauthenticity, Relph 1986/1976, 80-89.

[102] Compare chapters four, fifth section; five, second section; seven, first section, and the third section of the present chapter.

[103] Rybczynski 1995, 232-233.

[104] Rybczynski 1995, 46-47.

[105] A perspective on the fitness industry and the attraction of extreme bodily experiences, which I cannot develop here, opens up.

[106] Sennett 1996/1994, 349.

[107] Compare the description of a bus route as a place in chapter five, second section.

[108] I do not mean here to primarily point to social segregation, although public transportation in many cases often is used mostly by those who cannot afford a car.

[109] Mitchell 1995, 46-105.

[110] Mitchell 1995, 15-17.

[111] Welsch 1997, 194.

[112] For a description of these phenomena, see Mitchell 1995, 49-98.

[113] Mitchell 1995, 166; also 160.

[114] *Helsingin Sanomat*, October 10 1997.

[115] Welsch 1997, 198-201. He notes that "real communication even seems to constitute a sort of fulfilment - perhaps the ultimate fulfillment, the very completion - of electronic communication", 200.

[116] Welsch 1997, 198.

[117] Dreyfus 1993, 301-311; Heidegger 1954, 13-44.

[118] Dreyfus 1993, 310.

[119] Boyer 1996, 119; compare 74-126.

[120] Deleuze 1989, 271.

[121] Boyer 1996, 123; compare Hewitt 1993, Agamben 1993.

[122] Welsch 1996, 316-323 or 1997, 201 and 182-186. Also Mitchell puts forth this idea, but in a more hypothetical manner; Mitchell 1995, 104.

[123] The example is used by Welsch 1997, 196.

[124] Dreyfus 1994/1991, 208.

[125] Ehrenfeld 1993, 33.

[126] An example is the wilderness tourism in Finland, where people from more urbanized countries are brought here to share such exotic experiences as having coffee in the forest around a fire or using a kick-sledge.

[127] Shusterman 1992, 52.

[128] For an enumeration of possible meanings, see Lovejoy 1948.

[129] The area is on the coast east of the city centre, comprising an archipelago and a deep bay, near where the city´was first established in 1550.

[130] The example is chosen at random. A similar attitude to other cultures has been displayed in the behaviour of 'civilized' states towards indigenous peoples, who have been removed from their old places or, more euphemistically, 'given new land' elsewhere. Of course this is better than expatriation without any recompense.

[131] However, the status of individual natural places may be changed by a changed context, as when the surrounding "asphalt carpeting robs the suburban garden of its natural context and meaning"; Kemal and Gaskell 1993a, 19.

[132] On parks, compare the observations in chapter four, fifth section.

[133] On nineteenth century natural science, see Hargrove 1989, 77-107. For instructive reflections on a physicist's and a biologist's attitudes, on generality and diversity, Ehrenfeld 1993, 29-33, 104-123.

[134] Contal 1992b, 67.

[135] Compare Miller 1993, 24.

[136] Contal 1992b, 66.

[137] On the "evocative symbolism of trees", see Davies 1989/1988.

[138] Compare, on authentic places, Relph 1986/1976, 67-77.

[139] This observation was made in November 1996, when the library was not yet finished. The arrangement seemed permanent.

[140] The exhibition took place in the art museum *Arken* outside Copenhagen.

[141] For cross-references on transportation and traffic, see note 102 above.

[142] A study of images of a city constituted through different modes of transportation, on the lines of Lynch 1968/1960, would be interesting.

[143] On the symbolic and technical, or representational and ontological aspects of architecture, see Frampton 1995, 16, 89-90, 308, 381.

[144] See, for example, Frampton's discussion of Jørn Utzon in Frampton 1995, 275-292.

[145] On the ethical relevance of the articulation of details in architecture, see Scruton 1980, 206-236.

[146] Ehrenfeld 1993, 32.

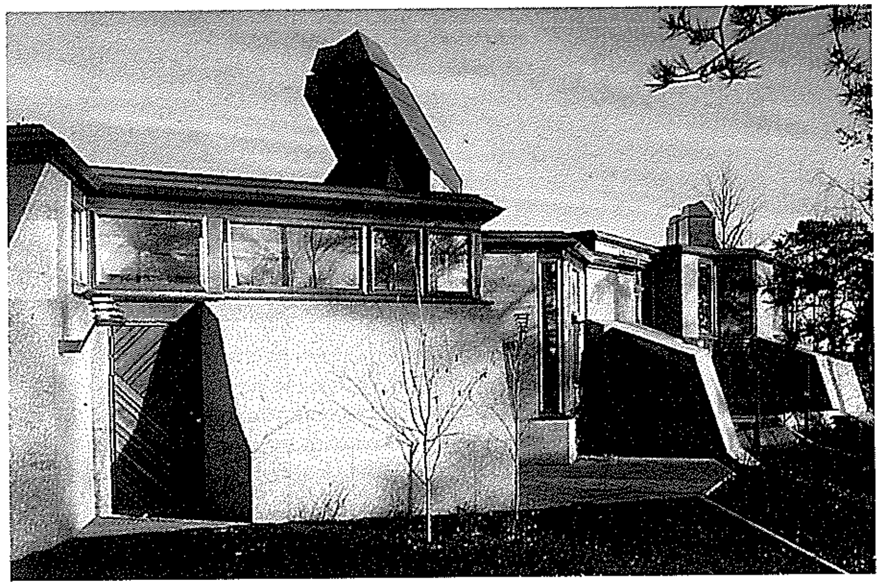
[147] Heidegger observes that "[t]he truckdriver is at home on the motorway"; Heidegger 1954, 145.

[148] Virilio 1996, 179-180.

[149] Virilio 1996, 180, italics in the text.

[150] Gregotti 1996, 78.

[151] It became one central theme in the postmodern theory of architecture; see for example, Portoghesi 1982.



infancy, The president's residence, Helsinki, photo Voitto Niemelä

Chapter seven

UTOPIAN TOPOLOGIES: VALUES IN THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

> *Situated at the interface of culture and nature, building is as much about the ground as it is about built form. Close to agriculture, its task is to modify the earth's surface in such a way as to take care of it (...) Furthermore, despite the privatization of modern society, architecture (...) tends to favor the space of public appearance rather than the privacy of the* ***domus****. At the same time, it is as much about place-making and the passage of time as it is about space and form. Light, water, wind, and weathering, these are the agents by which it is consummated. Inasmuch as its continuity transcends mortality, building provides the basis for life and culture.*[1] .

The built environment is of prime importance in expressing and articulating the relation of humans to the world. This is most importantly so because any built structure, while also representational, is part of material reality. Secondly, as part of material reality the built environment itself becomesmaterial in the constructive enterprises of understanding and imagining: many a novel, film and painting uses the city as a central element in exploring human life. Thirdly, in addition to being used for understanding, built structures are used to affirm, enhance and symbolize social structures or the identity of individual inhabitants.

In all these respects, but with different emphases, a building can be seen as both expression and symptom. One can ask, for example, whether high-rise housing is intentionally expressive of a certain view of human beings, or only expressive by accident. But then it should be noted that the apparently symptomatic may be part of the use of power: what is not stated explicitly may influence the inhabitants' self-understanding all the more efficiently, since it is taken to be part of the general, shared environment, the basis of our existence, rather than being suggested by some particular agent. Building as expression and symptom corresponds not only to what is declared openly, but also to the basic practices and organization of life, to the values which direct our lives. In addition to being a constructive and constitutive part of material reality, building is also a part of political and social reality. Particularly if we take note of its material and sensuous aspects and not just of the more formal ones, it is the encompassing stage for human existence.

In a human habitat, which is a mix of planned and unplanned, human and nonhuman, natural and cultural elements, some of the values we experience are nonanthropogenic, generated by nature or the ecosystem rather than by us. But although we grant the existence of naturogenic values it does not relieve or deprive us - depending on our point of view - from interaction with the environment and from the ensuing responsibility. Nature and culture are interwoven so that wherever we turn in a human habitat, we come across knots and nodes. In management these questions become urgent: how can we, in the activities or building and dwelling, give room for aspects of nature which we do not know? A general penchant towards letting things be may be attractive, but is it enough?

In this chapter, I look at values of the habitat from the opposite side, as compared to the observations of trends of contemporary building and urban life in the previous chapter, turning to a discussion of potential values of the environment. The perspective is utopian, but in a fragmented way. I shall not describe the ideal city as a totality; as hopefully is becoming clear, I do not believe that a good urban environment can be fully described, envisioned, or planned in advance[2]. The city is by nature - and culture - heterogeneous. Also the citizens are heterogeneous, not just as a group but in their individuality. Further, when I point to potential values I do not assume that they are or should be actualized in every situation, or that they are even always relevant. I try to suggest something of the richness of a habitat, which is due to the fact that it is not more than partly actualized in any situation or life. It must also be remembered that the built environment, in its material aspect, is a background and part of life but not its whole context.

One way to organize the discussion of potential aesthetic value in the built environment is to do it along three existential axes. It is then supposed that a human being exists and experiences herself in relation, first, to power, second, to other human beings, and, third, to nature. I call these axes or dimensions of existence the 'political', the 'social', and the 'natural'. Between them, no order of importance or preference is assumed; they simply point to three aspects of human situatedness. If it must be granted that they are as such insufficient for describing all aspects of dwelling, not to speak of human life, it is nevertheless my belief that they open relevant and fruitful perspectives on human dwelling. But they are useful only provided that we are sensitive to the overlappings. As all concepts, they can conceal as well as reveal, marginalize and highlight. Therefore I shall first try to describe them with some clarity and distinctness, attempting to show what is at their core.

With the political dimension belong the law-making and law-preserving functions of society[3]; the establishment and maintenance of order and rules of conduct, the social contract. But the political dimension is not just a dimension of management, it is also a sphere or space where ultimate values are dealt with, and so it has a cosmological aspect. Basically, law rests on and is a contract on shared values which have a claim to universality even in a society which deliberates over its code of laws, improving and rewriting it. In a fundamentally religious society, law stems from the source of ultimate value and power, from God or the gods, and in such a situation political and religious power may leave no space for democracy. But where state rule and heavenly rule are separate, earthly law is both an application of values and an attempt to safeguard them. Rules must, however, be created, and particular

situations demand discussion, decisions and action. The political dimension thus opens to democracy and to the social dimension.

In the social dimension, human relations are central. They include other people in situations which extend from the personal and intimate to the semi-public and public. In distinction from the political dimension, human beings are here encountered as persons and consociates rather than as representatives of institutions or performers of political roles. Here we find the unknown other, with whom we may exchange a few words, the persons belonging to our dwelling or working environment, our friends and foes, family and lovers. This is the dimension where we find identity and play out individuality, where we are transformed, affirmed or rejected by others: a human sphere.

If the social dimension borders on and overlaps with the political in its public end, it similarly overlaps with the natural in the more intimate situations of human interaction. For the natural is present in experiences where my body - and the body of another - is in focus, such as the sexual and, more generally, the nourishing. In these situations, finitude and dependence, through vulnerability and enjoyment, are evident. The natural arises from our condition as creatures of nature. In the environment, it is also focused upon nature, whether as processes or objects, as encompassing biosphere or at the local level of the interaction of an organism with its immediate environment. However, as nature is an ultimate ground of our being, it connects to the cosmological, and thus to the political dimension.

A church may exemplify the inseparability of these dimensions in the concrete environment. As a place for facing questions about life and death, love and fear, it is connected to the natural dimension. It is also a place for the community, a social space. Finally, more often than not a church plays or has played a cosmo-political role as the embodied symbol of basic systems of value, both political and religious[4]. While it represents cosmic order, it also structures the public world in which people live with each other. In different types of buildings and built spaces, the three dimensions are relevant in different degrees. If we think of them as axes of being-towards-the-world we understand, however, that none of them is ruled out, in principle, in the experience of any building. That would imply that the experiencer is present to the building only in some of his dimensions.

The triadic perspective functions as a backbone of this chapter, but more concrete viewpoints shall be utilized for perceiving and describing the utopian topologies. This is necessary since they overlap - being part of a shared reality - so that a description focused on one dimension must be complemented with descriptions of the others. Attending to concrete qualities and features is a way of making these overlappings evident. An indirect ontology[5] necessitates a topological description: complementary perspectives and an acknowledgement of the subject's embeddedness are needed. The subject is indeed a continuously orienting and oriented being; the axes of value of an environment are axes of being towards the world, where particular acts of recognition and identification are secondary. Thus my fragmented approach is a consequence of the belief that full reality cannot be given justice in one way. Mapping must be done repeatedly, from different angles, focusing on different aspects.

Some word pairs have been assigned the role of key notions or bell-cows, in the hope that they keep a herd of related notions together. The herds are mainly at home in one of the dimensions, but may walk over to the others and thus show the inevitable overlappings. The first of the bell-cows is 'order and access'. It is at home in the political dimension, and draws with it 'identity', 'hierarchy', 'structure', 'clarity', 'transparency' and 'orientation'. The second is 'space and recess', which comes in the company of functional, social and spatial affordances, which live in the social dimension. Third, there is 'cultivated and wild', of natural origin and browsing everywhere where some nature is present. But since nature is lived and cultivated, since it becomes forms of life, habitat and culture, the notions 'conviviality', 'continuity' and 'reconciliation' belong in this group, as do 'finitude' and the 'infinite', which even as tamed retain an aura of incalculability.

With the help of these words one may not find everything of value in the human habitat, but they bring to the fore important qualities and possibilities. Finally, it should be observed that all these values are, in a sense, existential: relevant to the general human condition rather than to a specific society.

Order and access

Order and clarity are basic values of the built public realm and of the political dimension of life. But order is a word with strong negative connotations as well as positive ones, especially in a political context: order imposed from above is often totalitarian. Therefore, it is important to distinguish between the immaterial political structures, or the political system, and the built structures which house and give an outward shape to the former. As I shall argue in more detail below, order and clarity in structures and spaces is a condition for their being open and creative. Walls create space, but do not define its use. As a feature of architecture, order also makes for accessibility which, in turn, makes engagement possible. The link between order and access, which is not self-evident and cannot stand without specifications, is the basic theme in this section.

Before continuing, it should be mentioned that the ideals of spatial organization I envision are based on the political ideal of democracy. They are also related to the vision of a secular state of moderate size, where people are born with equal rights and possibilities, at least as regards education and participation in political life. Inevitably, in reality these possibilities vary. The state is necessary for supporting the citizens, yet there is a limit to how much it should interfere. It is not incorrect to see a Nordic model as the background of these ideals. This includes welfare and care, possibilities for

human growth and creativity, but also the acknowledgement of human limitations and frailty. The point is not, however, to advocate a particular model.

One of the principles defended by the Nordic countries is the principle of the transparency of decision making, which concretely means, for example, that documents should be public and available on demand by the citizens. Transparency, as a general principle, is related to the function of order, which is to make easier the handling of common questions without defining beforehand the precise articulation of these questions. Clarity, order, the possibility for orientation are cognitive and practical values pertinent to the public realm in a state with a working democracy; they are necessary in order to understand how decisions are made and to participate in those decisions. According to this view, the notions of hierarchy and identity may also be defended; there are reasons to make the locus of power visible, so that citizens know where to go, whom to address and whom to put in charge. To be able to identify the locus and institutions of power makes it possible to question those who hold power, their policies and ideas. Firm structures make it possible to take a stance and to act[6].

The ideals of order and access are thus relevant to the public realm generally but especially to democratic institutions on the municipal, national and international level. But, as has been noted, these are not the only loci of power: there is, besides, economic power, which becomes a common, public concern as its consequences reach all sectors of society. Without discussing again the buildings and self-presentation of private or transnational capital, I only suggest that the perspectives I offer here could be applied, *mutatis mutandis*, to this sector of society. Let me only note that business companies are generally better at visibility than at accessibility.

In spite of Foucault's analyses of micro-power, in the political sphere everyone is not as responsible as everyone else. He is right in pointing to the way in which culture is both shared and confirmed in structures of behaviour and thinking, which cannot be located to one place or subject. But if micro-power is understood as a refutation of political struggle, suggesting that it does not *really* exist, the idea becomes a tool of ideological blindfolding.[7] If the idea of power as spread out and maintained in a decentred way may become blindfolding, a blurring of the loci of power into the urban tissue is likewise counterproductive to democracy, an ideal which that strategy might declare openly. But power on display should be displayed in a fairly neutral and cool way. The building or built complex is a locus but not a holder of power: it should form the background of the appearance of the political agents, their discussions and decisions, but it should neither affirm nor colour their arguments and actions. Politics and feeling should be kept apart, and politics should be ruled by substantial rationality. To be farsighted and visionary are virtues of the public realm. In fact, the dominance or hegemony of vision, which has been blamed for an overemphasis of human rational capacities, is appropriate in the public realm. Since this is a field of deliberation, discussion and decision-making, the other distant sense, hearing - along with speaking and listening - is also important[8].

I shall return later to how the built environment might support such features as order and access. At this point it might be asked whether, despite the overall emphasis on transparency, there is not also need for concealment and privacy in the realm of public affairs?[9] I would say yes, not because the political system has legitimate secrets, but because clarity depends on maturation. The perspectives and suggestions which are the material of decision-making should be allowed the time for preparation, rather than being exposed and compromised too early. In the ideal political realm, parties and perspectives which provide the substance of discussion have their roots outside the sites of power. Inside, they should be able to hold on to the experience of what they represent and to defend the interests, needs and values arising in that experience. This is not possible if the irreducibility of that experience is not acknowledged and given its own space. An emphasis on order and clarity does not imply that everything should be on show. The latter view, rather, represents a pornographic understanding of human subjectivity, which must remain shallow.

The buildings which are loci of political power represent society, but society is double in nature in a way which now needs attention. On the one hand, power structures are opposed to the individual, and in this capacity they are experienced as a *they* (the decisionmakers) or an *it* (power). Each citizen is subject to legislation, decisions and structures which exist independently of himself. This is the aspect of power as law. On the other hand, society is also *we*. The people, the citizens, the voters are not just subjects but together constitute the society; each individual is a constitutive part of *it*. In the built environment the two aspects, state and people, law and subjects, are relevant. They point, on the one hand, to the need for detaching public building from the urban tissue in the name of honesty but, on the other, to the need for possibilities of access and attachment, in order not to conceal that the legitimacy of the state rests on the citizens.

In public buildings with political functions society is primarily present as *it*. The individual confronts, in part, society in and through these buildings; the political axis of existence finds in these buildings points of attachment. Public buildings make it possible to identify power; even if I do not need to see the city mayor, I should know where she is. But it is important to note that the buildings which stand for power in its subjecting aspect are also symbolical sites for the coming-together of different opinions, for discussion and disagreement. The Parliament House is where my vote goes, and in following the news, it is thither that my opinion, satisfied or dissatisfied, is directed.

In its lawgiving and -maintaining function, the state typically presents itself as based on something more than the support of citizens through a political system. Note, first, the inherent transcendence of the notion of people itself, due to the fact that each individual, although as important as anybody else, is replaceable. When I die, the world will not turn around, and even Finland will hardly shiver. The people in whose midst I live transcend me, but collectively they also make up a living, changing entity with soft boundaries, constantly renewed and dying away. In comparison, structures of power present themselves as fixed, standing out in the humdrum of life if not *qua* eternal, then at least *qua* tested and continuous; a backbone, a tradition which keeps the people together and makes it a society.

The state often seeks indications of its own legitimacy in origins. Architectural classicism in its Greek versions is a favourite among states that declare themselves democracies: a relation to what that style represents is established through ideals and ideas even if it does not exist as geographical and historical continuity. Enlightenment thinking in the United States produced Capitol Hill, in Russia both Peterhof and, in a generous gesture to the autonomy of Finland, the Senate Square in Helsinki. While we may dispute the democratic quality of the political systems of these eras, there was a genuine political will which manifested itself in both building and reform. Buildings never lie, even when they do not communicate what was originally intended, for their meaning exists in relation to present contexts and use.

Style and stylistic references combine the historical with the utopian dimensions of a building: looking backwards with constructing a present that lasts into the future. The role especially of public buildings in creating visions of the present and of the future can be important, and a lack of courage in this respect may be symptomatic of a similar lack in other respects[10]. But if the presentation of visions in construction may be utopically suggestive, one must note that not all utopias are good. Many a monument smothers social life, as Bataille said. However, to withdraw from the presentation of human ideals in construction is not a viable option.

To Ernst Bloch, the idea of utopia is connected to hope; not to a naive assertion of a better alternative here and now, but to a suggestion of the existence of a different world, a "not yet" which is anticipated and hoped for rather than known[11]. What would this idea mean for building? I would suggest that it leads towards ideals of noncoincidence and a detachment of utopian elements from the actual use of the building as a space for everyday political action. Instead of integrating beauty and symbolic content - whatever it is - with the functions, so that everyday work in the House of Parliament is constantly dressed up, the symbolic elements should exist in buildings as reminders and suggestions of ideals which remain other and regulative in function. The people who work in a building which serves democracy do not deserve a different kind of respect than the people outside whom the former serve. The parliament, as a democratic institution, deserves respect, but there is nothing transcendental or mystical about its value. Totalitarian power, on the contrary, typically attempts to integrate the highest values in its symbolic buildings. It suggests that power is here, immanent, embodied, not just in the built structures but also in its officiants. The same strategy has been used in many religions and has been opposed in counter-movements.

In addition to the symbolization of relations to past and future through architectural style, buildings have a more material and acquired, rather than intended, temporal dimension, which involves some features of particular interest in the political realm. One is openness, backwards and forwards in time, due to the impossibility of knowing the past entirely and of foreseeing the future. A building or a site, however central in the symbolical self-presentation of a society, always contains more than what is declared: it might be seen differently, for there are additional, untold events. This is true also of the monument, as indicated by the project *Monumental Propaganda*, where the artists Komar and Melamid, born in the Soviet Union, investigated ways to creatively reuse the monuments of their former fatherland, which so suddenly were emptied of value at least in official discourse[12]. That there should be alternatives to destroying a monument when what it represented is rejected points in the same direction as warnings against the abuse of history. The past is plural, and its teachings for the present and future are related to the perception of particularity and to the resistance of reality to one explanation.[13] If the monument is allowed to be a place for remembering, without defining how we should remember, it may include openness and acknowledgement of plurality[14].

That the past cannot be known entirely, makes it fascinating. It becomes a space to imaginatively inhabit, suggestive of other forms of life than those we presently share. But if the past is closed - through a definition of its correct interpretation, often accompanied by a ritualization of its monuments and their use - also the present and future are closed. At this point, in the imaginative probing of history, the symbolic presentations of society become part of its lived, present reality. Here, it is not so much a question of *it* versus *we*, but of a historical substance, of people and country as they transcend the individual and his present and constitute (some of) his origins.

The temporal, historical dimension is relevant to how citizens understand the community they are part of and which maintains the state. It becomes part of present life through the imaginative engagement of individuals with a past which is not only experienced as belonging to them, but also as an integral part of themselves. Identification makes these matters serious and sometimes dangerous, as examples of exaggerated nationalism or ethnicity during the last centuries show. These examples also raise a question about the interests or needs served by positing a people as one, collective subject. This certainly serves the interests of those who come to power and keep power through emphasizing such a narrative, but mostly it does not serve the interests of individuals on the level of everyday life. It may create a sense of community[15], but then one must ask whether there are not other, less totalizing ways to support or create such a sense? I shall suggest some in connection to the social dimension of existence in the next section.

The question whether the *we* of society is experienced or declared as being constituted by origin or presence, by geographical boundaries or by a supposed common history, is relevant to the presentation of society in the built environment. On the one hand, it is a question of style, national or universal. On the other hand, and more importantly, it is a question of the homogeneity or heterogeneity of public building, especially in the key sites of power. Further, an emphasis on the common origin of a people is analogous to the paradigmatic approach to buildings, while the view of society as constituted by those who inhabit it at present, regardless of origin, is parallel to the syntagmatic approach[16]. In the will to understand an entity, building or people, through its origin, paradigmatic thinking purifies and thus reduces the plurality and particularity of both history and present. The principle of a common origin, of "blood", often means that community is based on abstraction, in contrast to the principle of shared land, which accepts those who actually inhabit an area as part of the community, belonging to it, not indifferently but in mutual difference[17]. To take the syntagmatic as one's starting point in dealing with building or people is to accept that orders are multiple, that experiences of disorder and distress, for reasons of conflicting interests and insufficient knowledge, will remain. The syntagmatic approach, comprising the traces of several histories, denying none, is in fact truer to the matter of history than the paradigmatic approach, and also more attuned to democracy. The syntagmatic, as a starting-point, is not an alternative to history, but to idealization.

A longing for the authentic, for that which is what it is without rationalization may go hand in hand with a disregard for difference. In building and planning, an emphasis on respect for the existing urban tissue may lead to a mummification of the present and of history as it has unfolded until now, which is at the same time a rejection of the present moment and of one's own position and responsibility in it. This observation is pertinent to public building, but also to the overall responsibility of state authorities with regard to planning and building in general. A reaction against planning is no more innocent than planning, and to rely on the belief that urban areas grow spontaneously is to disregard, not to solve problems.

Technocratic planning and anarchistic antiplanning are both birds-eye views which do not give answers to the challenges of the present, including the demanding concreteness of a city and the lessons of history, whether positive or negative. Inclusion and confrontation of difference imply an active stance[18]. Only if this is granted can architecture embody the kind of hope discussed earlier and become, with Gregotti's words, prediction, "attracting the path of the future toward its own hypothesis, as well as influencing that future's movements"[19]. As difference and plurality are part of the present, of the past, and of any foreseeable future, the totalizing load of any one building is limited. This speaks for the need of building that articulates the present. Such building creates order by articulating positions, which become nodes in a shared geography, and it creates access by establishing relations, links and contrasts to the environment. To leave everything as it is is to betray that task of modernity, which coonsists in establishing difference "that organizes the conflicts of a situation by functioning as a critical instrument for examining what already exists"[20]. Architecture, and in particular public building, has a fundamental political mission related to the existence of a *polis*, understood as a space for discussion and decisions, as well as for dissent.

Here the affirmative character of building, related to the absence of an identifiable, specific author in the situation of experience, must not be forgotten. A building affirms what it presents because it stands before us simply, straightforwardly, without a mediating perspective. Especially a public building asserts itself as centre, making the user or visitor aware that her own position and perspective is relative and limited. In front of or inside a magnificent public building, solipsism is defeated. For a similar reason, the affirmed content of the building is presented as generally valid, however bold or radical it may be. But what the building asserts it also asserts in relation to its own function, and so the history represented by and present in the building becomes integrated, if only metaphorically, in the institution.

Although I shall not describe good public buildings in any detail, which because of the specificity of each cultural situation would not be desirable, I shall now take up some more specific perspectives: modes of experience and movement relative to scale, detachment from and connectedness to the urban environment, and rationality versus imagination in the outward shape of buildings. Generally, the focus is on an aesthetics of spaces and forms, where for reasons already mentioned the rational is emphasized. But this does not mean that materials, opacity, or the irrational would have no role to play.

Space as the space around a building implies distance. Experienced space and distance, in the sense of quantity, are dependent on modes of movement and transportation or, at one extreme, on the lack of movement, as when we are forced to stand still or remain outside the gates. Public, political buildings are for the most part buildings we pass by, sometimes buildings we look at, even sit or stand in front of. The separation of the citizens's body from the building is in part due to the fact that he seldom has a reason to visit the building, so that it does not become integrated with his actively inhabited environment. But the standing apart of the building is of course also due to its status and cultural context, to the knowledge that it is a place hierarchically set apart, but where basic rules are decided. Along with physical separation there is therefore an intellectual engagement with such a building, which is a locus of hopes and frustrations of the political realm.

Physical detachment means that vision is even more privileged than normally. Houses of power - municipal, national, international - are present to us as images, which also accompany our thoughts about the institutions. Thus the idea of the Finnish parliament evokes the image of the building which looks over the city and faces, as it were, the whole country, an image maintained more through encounters in media than in real life. One only rarely goes to look at or visit the city hall of the place where one lives; still it may be permanently present in the image repertoire of one's mind. To visit a foreign capital is different, one probably notices sites of power and looks at them with some curiosity or a benign interest, but they do not affect one and are quickly forgotten. In a foreigner's world, those places are not loci of effective power.

Fences force the passer-by to look only at the building. The distance thus created emphasizes, together with the fence, the size or grandeur of the building and the smallness and powerlessness of the human being in front of it. To be deprived of the possibility to move is one way of being made powerless and diminished.[21] One is responsible but not in control; one answers for oneself, but without the possibility to genuinely question the power one is subjected to.[22] This is how many palaces are built. A more modern and democratic way of building a politically central building is to place it on top of a high hill, but without fences. The building's relation to its environment is then one of looking over a city and, suggestively, a world. The citizen can climb up, but this demands both physical effort and some courage, and he does not normally do it. Still another possibility is to place such a building on a slope or in an area which combines access with visibility. Such is the placement of the Royal Palace in Oslo, and this makes it possible for the visitor to share the gaze of power which thereby becomes humanized. Perhaps this kind of imaginative accessibility, if only of the site as site, describes the attraction of guards, particularly if their uniforms have an element of fantasy. By standing or parading in front of the central public buildings they not only stand for keeping away those or that which does not belong and which might threaten power, but they also expose a human body as part of the institution of power. The popularity of the benignly waving appearance of persons of real or symbolical power in front of the people, for example from a balcony of the palace, can be understood similarly. Ruler and people are present bodily to each other; the greeting is a symmetrical, two-way relation where the visual impact is enforced through cries which fill the air and transform the space from abstract, empty distance to shared medium. This is an experience where, if ever, my flesh and the flesh of the world - the environment, nature, culture and other bodies - become interchangeable.

The kinaesthetic dimension of sensuous experience is certainly vital for environmental engagement, but its emotional aspects are a double-edged sword in the public realm, as examples show[23]. However, an intimate, bodily knowledge of an environment does not constitute an alternative, but a complement to other forms of knowledge. To know an environment from walks is different from knowing it from a moving vehicle. The walking body is directly and reciprocally present in and to an environment[24], and the sense of distance is relative to the pace and effort of movement. Further, in walking we are dependent only on our own capacities: exposed and vulnerable, but also in control. The walking or standing body is what it is, it does not hide, and it relies on itself. It is an image of dignity, carrying its own load, admitting responsibility and asserting subjectivity[25]. The public building or institution which stands apart may be seen in the same perspective:

in asserting its presence it also submits itself to possible attacks and criticism. On the other hand, if it is possible to walk near a central public building, power and citizens will not inhabit two different worlds, but dwell in proximity, if not confronting, then at least acknowledging each other's existence and relevance.

The site of a building, including its relative distance from the street, influences its experienced size and suggests something about the symbolic position of the individual in the political system. Scales are also often at play in the interiors of buildings which serve political functions. The oversized *Reichskanzlei* of the Nazi regime was probably one of the most blatant examples of this kind of building[26]. Windows and doors, which are often in one way or another adapted to the size of the human body, were oversized, so that each human being would appear to himself and to others as too small. In the *Führer's* room, the great distance between entrance and desk would increase the apparent size of the desk and of the man behind it. At the same time, the size and luxuriousness of the building might have given a timeless quality to power, placing it in a realm beyond criticism. But the play with scales may also be more subtle, causing only a slight sense of discomfort; a feeling rather than an articulated insight about one's awkwardness. A similar effect may come from the materials of the building; how they feel and greet the body of the visitor, in comfort or discomfort.

The experience of a building and of its size is affected by the presence and behaviour of other people, of vehicles, of trees. These form an immediate context which frames and distances the building from its larger environment. This boundary may, however, be soft, and public buildings need more absolute, stricter boundaries as well. Even in a public building, privacy is needed: separation of the building from the environment or of people from each other inside the building is not just a sign of isolation, but also a means for providing spaces where individual viewpoints can develop. The wall may thus be taken as a literal and material, but also metaphorical feature, which ensures the kind of detachment that makes (re)connection and responsibility possible. The wall makes for order and clarity, separating the private realm, where ideas are prepared, and the public realm, where they are presented and tested. The outside and the inside of a space of power is not a question of us and them, but of political roles, and it is as performers of these roles that those who hold power are different from the rest of us. Their performance and judgement is rendered difficult if the space of politics is not set apart. The same is true in the life of a single individual. When an MP or president is off duty she should be allowed to be at home, in a different realm, in the nonpublic world, and when she starts working, the relevance of her background should be seen as valuable both substantially and as a relativizer of power. This double-bind is possible only if the public realm appears different from the social and private[27].

Particularly if we want to give a constructive ethical and political importance to order and access, they must not be identified with the transparency of glass walls. On the contrary, the resistance and opacity of materials might suggest cultural points of resistance, in the double sense of platforms and objects[28]. Materials or walls which enclose areas we cannot peep into affirm the irreducibility of difference in the real and concrete world, whether approached as culture or as material reality. This resistance and difference is of matter as compared to mind - it escapes totalizing control - but also the difference between individuals, where the impossibility to fully understand another should be acknowledged. In the human being materiality and subjectivity are equally real, and both resist rational control in their proper but mixed ways.

In the public realm, the resistance of the world in relation to me is not my privilege, and therefore I must not give up in the face of it. If the public realm is ideally constituted as the interplay of different viewpoints, it is my duty not to give up my own. Also, the dynamic of the situation is appeased and killed if ossification is not allowed, if bones are burnt and intestines put on the table in the belief that everything can finally be shown. Boundaries and walls, the acknowledgement of interior and exterior, a here and a there, make encounters possible - confrontations, discussions. These are mutually affirmative not because they would lead to consent, but because they give us a sense of existence with others, of taking part, of being touched and spoken to as well as heard.

What comes together in opacity, resistance, and emotion seems necessary for engagement, thus for action, but only if combined with a reciprocity in the relations between those who rule and those who are ruled, and with a provision of spaces for action[29]. Clearly, such spaces need not be tangible. Yet the concreteness and reality of built space cannot be compensated for in virtual space: expressive elements of communication, such as pauses, hesitation, withdrawing, are there only if they are here, in this room.

Richard Sennett warns against paying too much attention to personality in politics[30]. I have similarly argued against too much expression and adornment in public buildings, especially if these appear as integral parts of an institution of power. But rationality and coolness may become ideologies in their own right, and negation of personality is not the way towards reasonable and just politics. Could there therefore be ways of providing not spaces but points of attachment, a presence of personality which does not force us to relate in a certain way? If the building is seen as a dwelling not of one, but of several; if it is not treated only as totality, but also as conglomerate; if the social aspect of urban heterogeneity and the personal aspect of dwelling, with memories and images, is taken seriously - perhaps there are ways of bringing enlivening spirits into the temples of power? Elements of anarchy question power, but only if they appear next to it, as the jester used to do.

In the final part of this section, I shall reflect on formal, symbolic or stylistic features which represent something extra in relation to the whole of the building: adornment or ornament. The focus is on the interior of public buildings. I use the overall term 'decoration' and understand it in a large sense, comprising the use of materials and the articulation of fixed details as well as pieces of furniture, works of art, and other separate objects. Typically, some decorative elements were part of the building from the beginning, while others were added later[31]. To discuss such elements is to seek mediating perspectives on the expressivity and atmosphere of public spaces, holding on to the idea that they should not be too strong in overall expression, yet also remembering that the attempt to avoid expression may lead to alienating neutrality, or to an aggressive assertion of rationality.

Perhaps one way to deal with this question is to look separately at the atmosphere and expressivity of a building[32]. This distinction is to some extent artificial, yet useful if one remembers that in a concrete situation, expressive or symbolic elements are constitutive parts of the atmosphere. But they are not its sole elements. Atmosphere is importantly a question of how a given space is used and presented. This includes its illumination, its sound- and smellscape, the life that the space provides room for. Atmosphere is also a subjective aspect of building, since it exists only in relation to an experiencer. A public building that is solemn and rational in its overall form may provide human qualities: a comfortable chair in a peaceful corner, light that does not hurt the eyes, railings that are pleasant to touch. These details address the human body in an anonymous, general way, where neither object or subject needs to be known or identified. They do not require anything specific but, on the contrary, affirm the visitor as a full human being. Even if the overall expression of a building is solemn and rigid, it may provide pleasant and comfortable, almost cozy spaces, as in the Finnish Parliament House, where the human qualities of the atmosphere have to do with the use of materials, colour and light. On the other hand, the visitor is always on show in this building; there are hardly any corners into which to withdraw, except the ladies' or men's rooms.

Figurative statues or reliefs as part of public buildings or generally of the self-presentation of a state are problematical, especially when they are very general. This may seem paradoxical, but is due to the fact that the supposed average person is a human being seen in a certain light. Take the statues of women in front of the Oslo Town Hall, or the mother with a child standing with her naked back to the Finnish Parliament: young and healthy people, glorifying the vitality of life. What if a woman would like to be something more or if a human being should be given the right to age? The average person does not exist, and when a public institution presents this fiction, the effect is either propagandistic or naive, or both. Figures from a mythical or fictive past do not run the risk of offending contemporaries, since they do not claim to be models, only examples for us; individuals with a different life in a different time. They have a genuine otherness which is ethically relevant, not because we would worship the statue, which is only a material thing, but because they might become part of reflections on the kind of action needed in this time, in this world. The pure fictionality of a mythical figure and the detachment of his world from ours saves him from

guardians, Lars Sonck and Valter Jung, Privatbanken, MFA, photo Pekka Korvenmaa some of the bias which accompanies statues of historical persons, especially if they belong in the immediate past. If a statue of the average human being inevitably becomes a statue of the human being seen at a particular time, the same must be said of any style, whether it reflects Classicism or perhaps some version of a national style. But here, too, a building which does not attempt to define who we are is preferable to building that does, since even if the angel of history turns his back to the future, the direction is forward.

Decoration may decrease as well as increase the unity of a building. A decorative element may appear as part of the same world of expression[33] as the whole building, but it may also appear as separate, distinct, thus adding complexity and plurality. To add elements may be an aesthetic disadvantage - an aspect that architects are well aware of - and still in some cases bad taste is more desirable than correctness. Also, additions, subtractions, wear and change are inevitable to some degree. The use of a building for a new purpose or the marks of time in a wall already introduce otherness. Ornament or expressive detail may also appear in its own right rather than in the service of a presupposed unity. Decoration may produce breaks in the normal use of a building; creating moments of reflection or offering alliances for the criticism of power. In crazy or humorous decoration individuals or individuality from a world that cannot be fully appropriated appear.

Both anonymity and nonrepressive otherness should be included in buildings, especially public ones, for the sake of balance. Balance is, as in the body, dependent on movement and life. In absolute stasis, one falls over; without movement, one loses a sense of direction. Similarly, the balance of the public realm, performed and represented in building, does not require dramatic expression but a recognition that movement and openness are necessary conditions for the stability and longevity of the public realm. The inhabitants of a temple of power should be seen in the plural.

Space and recess

I shall approach the social dimension of urban life mainly as a world of functional, social, cognitive, imaginative, emotional, and sensuous affordances. Such affordances need not constitute possibilities to act concretely here and now, but they are always connected to what could be done or thought. They are suggestive of possibilities and constitute real or imaginative enlargements of or alternatives to the subject's present activity and role. The notion of 'space', as I use it here, is connected to such affordances. Space, as an environmental quality, characterizes environmental experiences of possibility or enlargement, of the openness or opening of a situation - the opposite of confinement and constraint[34]. It is an overall quality, based in various particular features of subject or environment, typically both. The subject is not locked into a situation or an identity, yet space does not obliterate the concreteness of place. Since space is experienced, it is inseparable from the sensing body and the situation.

The quality of space enhances, even makes possible social life, creativity, communication as well as anonymity, intimacy, rest, fantasy and adventure. Space is a condition for the vitality and enjoyment of social life, if creative interaction is based on the acknowledgement of difference in ourselves and in others, and on a freedom and feeling at ease which includes the willingness to change and adjust one's projects. Space implies plurality, suggests that there are other rationalities, ways of seeing and sensing, experiential backgrounds and needs than ours. As situated openness, which does not deny particularity, space therefore serves rational communication in the political realm, but this is not its only or primary value. Human interaction, in its various forms, is enjoyed for its own sake. Human life is not oriented only towards meaning or truth, and the alternative to such an orientation is not meaninglessness. Quality of life is related to activities and ways of performing the everyday that are playful, sensitive and perceptive rather than correct according to some general criteria. The relevant attitude is found with play and appearance, enjoyment and care rather than with correctness or abstract truth. Such an attitude is not one of indifference, but of generous engagement, where the imposition of one's ego or ideas is not the aim. Josef Frank's suggestion that "the human dwelling will become the most important but also the most purposeless building in our time" and that the dwelling is "the house that is meant to serve nothing but its own case" can be understood in this light[35].

Space gives possibilities, but does not force us to follow them up. As a plurality of possibilities, space is also a condition for appropriating an environment. Only if we are allowed to exist and act in a way which makes us feel comfortable can we have an intimate relation to an area or building, feel that it gives room for us, so that in return we can and want to take it to ourselves. If, on the contrary, a room is defined, filled up and occupied totally by another person, a function or an institution, it is hard to establish a personal relation to it, for it keeps the individuality of its visitor at bay. Blank anonymity may also do so. But there is also the pleasant anonymity of environments which without being defined are individuated, for example through craft, technique and care, perceptible as traces of work, of a literal human touch.

If space were not experienced in individuated situations but in blank openness, it could contain neither possibilities nor suggest openings, for there would be no point where to start. Similarly, space and recess are not opposites, but complementary. The possibility to draw back is an important possibility of space, so that recess is found in space, in the possibility to look away from the immediate situation, to turn to another companion, another view, another idea. Space gives room for the anonymity of the subject in a shared habitat, where possibilities for withdrawal from the demands of work or sociability provide not only rest, but also the possibility of change, of becoming different and other, thus nearer to others' difference. This is an alternative to the present situation, where secluded privacy, desperate entertainment or absorbing hobbies appear to be escape routes from the demands of professional or family life. In such a situation, the everyday is lost.

Space and recess do not represent the alternatives of being social or not; both notions are meaningful only in the social context. By securing the possibility of not being engaged with what is immediately around, the individual is given the opportunity to contribute and interact in ways that differ from the average and expected. But it must be remembered that social interaction or, simply, being among others, does not imply that one expresses a supposed inner self. The self is not an inner entity that is expressed in outward behaviour, but exists in the relations of a human being to the environment. Yet a human being is not only behaviour, but also an experienced, contemplating and reflecting being: there is interiority and continuity of personality, and although there is no unchanging inner essence, there are personal traits that make us different from each other from the start. It is only against this background that the anonymity of urban life acquires its true worth.[36]

On the street, anonymity and selfhood are simultaneous: I am what I am, but those around do not know me, and yet my sense of self is also dependent on how I appear to them. We perform to those who do not know us, and it is among strangers that appearance counts most, since there is nothing else to rely on. The more public and general a particular space is, the more conscious we are of our own appearance. In a familiar environment, such as in one's own neighbourhood, there might not only be a sense of belonging, but also the chance of recognizing and being recognized by other people. Then personal appearance is not so decisive, for there is an awareness of, even an element of affirmation of the other's interiority. To me my neighbour is not a person I know, and neither does she know me, but through her repeated appearance my world a recognition of the fact that here is a different, unique life story is established. Not many encounters are needed before a face is perceived, and when it is recognized it is not the known, but the unknown that is acknowledged. To remain anonymous, to some extent, to each other, does not threaten but shields one's interiority and integrity.

The possibility of being recognized by and recognize others strengthens the sense of belonging. It affords points of attachment for one's self in the environment: a way of being present in that space which has nothing to do with the physical space taken up by a body. Recognizability is, rather, experienced as directions and relations. In passing a store, I am aware of the proprietor, of the possibility that he sees me through the window or comes out and nods. Remember also Benjamin's observation of how an area changed when a friend moved in, "as if a searchlight set up at this person's window dissected the area with pencils of light"[37].

Housing areas, neighbourhoods, and in principle all parts of the urban tissue that are accessible by foot and not occupied by central, public institutions, are the areas where the citizen as person can best take part in the shared environment. In one's own neighbourhood, one can contribute to the

constitution of social space and to the appearance of the built environment. Where I live, I make a difference through my ways of moving around and of meeting people. In the shops or sauna where I go more often, I am at home to some extent, even when the other customers are unknown. In comparison, in official, public spaces all citizens are equal, but nobody actually counts as a person, and in the home one is oneself, but mostly only for those who already belong, in some sense, with oneself.

There is a contributive and creative side of social existence: as we are immersed in the world as its integral parts the world is not unchanging but transformed in the cultural practices through which we maintain it[38]. Creativity is not the prerogative of selfhood centered upon its own being. In addition, if inauthenticity in social relations is to do the expected, it does not necessarily conflict with authenticity understood as going one's own way[39]. To be distanced in human relations does not imply misjudging the complexity and unicity of other persons; the contrary may as well be true.[40] There is a pleasure and relief in superficiality and politeness, which affirm the normal without probing the character of the other or demanding either deep responsibility or the revelation of an inner self. Note here that normality is not a truth about anyone, and that balance in social relations cannot be taken for granted. Further, to deny the existence of an inner self is not to imply that exterior and interior are irrelevant in understanding human subjectivity. The point is that the interior as such is chaotic, unclear, and probably remains so. However much we analyze, there is always another level beneath the one we explained, another flesh around the bones we lay bare. Social rituals, even in their diluted contemporary form, have a bonding and affirmative function, establishing mutuality and trust between people who do not know each other but share space which is, among other things, affective[41] but the analogy is there..

The social sphere has often been described in relation to the home. Arendt follows this model, in contrasting *oikos* with *polis*; and so does Levinas, who describes the relation to the other as starting in the home, in a sphere of "interiority and economy"[42]. Whereas Arendt discusses the disappearance of a genuinely political sphere, in Levinas this sphere is not thematized: there is interiority and exteriority, but despite the emphasis on the relation of subject to the other as neighbour the real neighbours, concrete and particular, are not much discussed. The same is even more true of discussions originating in Heidegger's notion of dwelling: it is as if the subject dwelt alone in the world, in a direct, unmediated relation to a nameless collective, rather than in the midst of a differentiated society of individuals[43].

One may indeed ask if the home, as a permanent place, is an apt or sufficient starting point in describing the social dimension, or even dwelling, today. In the sense of abiding, even people who have a home dwell not only there, but also in various public and semi-public places. To be attached to one home-place is in no evident sense an ideal for urban life, although it can be so for agricultural life - if and when attachment to a particular piece of land, responsibility for it and sustainable cultivation are connected. My aim is not to deny the feeling of homelessness; in this study, I have pointed to various factors which increase the blank anonymity of the environment and a forced, unhappy detachment. Nevertheless, if the home is taken to be the key problem and challenge of social life, other and bigger challenges may go unnoticed. As we learn from Boyer and Sennett, the cult of the home as the only place of recess and personal belonging in a threatening world is already increasing the destruction of land and of cities as social environments[44]. For this reason, I prefer the more abstract and flexible term of 'recess'. It does not indicate a disrespect for the human need of attachment and continuity of places but, on the contrary, assumes that there should be a possibility to feel at ease also outside one´s own home - a possibility for comfortable and exciting experiences in shared urban space - and that there can be more than one place we call home. Perhaps everybody does not need a home in the traditional sense, although people certainly need points of attachment. But these need not be where one sleeps.

Maybe an *ethos*, a stance towards the world, a speaking up, demands a place from where to speak[45]. But this place should not be understood in a too literal or fundamentalistic manner, as if people were stuck to their origins with invisible glue. Culturally, the place one belonged to is always lost or on the way of being so: people die, their behaviour and thinking change. There may still be other places where one can feel at home, either in a personal way, if they remind one of a familiar area, or impersonally, if they have qualities which make them appear as human and inviting.

In the general sense, to feel at home in a culture or a society is to be comfortable[46], so that one does not have to flee inside the walls of one's home, into drugs, or on endless travels to exotic places. This kind of comfort is not the same as total satisfaction or uncritical proudness, but includes a willingness to criticize and change. Taken the complexity of contemporary society and the range of the problems humankind has created, it is improbable that a comfortable citizen - who does not fear information about global and national misery - would be too satisfied. Comfort hardly silences anyone, if it is not combined with fear. Rather, it is the complexity of contemporary societies and the global system which discourages individuals from participation. Development, with its destructive and beneficial consequences, proceeds like an automaton, and at the same time there is a sense of social reality disintegrating, people standing on insecure ground, disappearance of jobs, increase in inequality and poverty, and the cynicism and hypocrisy of leading politicians who declare that this is the way we must go, the only way. Technology has become a caricature of religion.

The alienation of those in charge from a large part of the citizens - apparent in low poll rates - may strengthen a sense of independence among the citizens, but another face of this independence is indifference. As the political system does not take responsibility for the basic welfare of its citizens it loses, or gives up, its legitimacy. As it does not care, it is not cared for. Two existing reactions are that richer people move to areas where security is provided by private means and that others detach themselves from their environment and society in radical indifference, which takes various forms. The quality of the environment and the sense of belonging influence each other, but not necessarily in an enhancing way. It must be remembered that belonging is both a societal and an environmental relation. To feel that one belongs in an ugly and inhuman housing block without any possibility to influence it only makes one's situation more miserable. To be included as a number - not acknowledged as a person, without the rights to move and act - is to be excluded as a person.

In reflecting on the social dimension of habitats and searching for qualities which make the environment richer, more supportive and humane, structures of management cannot be neglected. Management, construction and maintenance are key terms for my observations on the social dimension of dwelling, and I shall deal with them in this order. They are all related to how things are made, whether in the present, as ongoing activities, or in the past, as the way a wall was built. They also involve care that is by definition future-oriented: streets and parks need to be cleaned, so that they are pleasant to frequent. Both general functionality and dignity are involved in these activities.

To start with management, Paul Chemetov notes that in the immediate environment of a block or a street, care or lack of care is perceived directly. In large housing areas, the managers' anonymity blurs the inhabitants' understanding of political hierarchies and of the relation between private and public. What appears is simply that we are ruled by anonymous they, where the president of the nation and the manager of the area are not clearly separated. As a solution, Chemetov therefore proposes privatization, which means a division of the habitat into smaller units of management, where there would be face-to-face, personal relations between inhabitant and manager, instead of the faceless "clientism".[47] Even if everybody does not want to take part in managing an area, the point about being able to locate, recognize and address those who are in charge remains. This possibility individualizes the environment and makes it worthwhile to observe and care for it. To be aware of how one's area is inhabited and managed is also to be more aware of the social dimension: awareness that the area is shared with others comes with observations on how this appears. To be properly and fully here, in person, is to be with others. To feel a personal presence in one's dwelling area does not mean that one becomes more fully oneself by focusing on one's navel or by getting one's preconceived ideas through, but on the contrary, that a sense of personal fulfilment comes through social relations which admit changes to what one used to think.

Community understood as commitment to place[48] is a nonrepressive understanding of community, based on what is *here*, rather than on *what* is here. It gives room for individual differences, disputes and points of resistance; in fact, takes them for granted. This topological understanding of social reality acknowledges the heterogeneity of inhabited places and the weight of personal presence, but it must not be seen only in the perspective of serving management. The subordination of social life to the functioning of the political system is, rather, at the root of the present alienation. When politicians regard citizens as *our* citizens or voters instrumentality has already corrupted the understanding of human relations, which cannot be understood simply as means[49]. The notion of user in discussions of the built environment is similarly misguided: it suggests that buildings are instruments and that there is one group who produces them and another that uses them - the clients. My emphasis on affordances as central to the social dimension of dwelling aims to broaden the sphere of practicability beyond defined functions, towards understanding the ways of living differently that the built environment may suggest. In other words, it is a question of making practices into a material for the aesthetic and of enlarging the former with the help of imaginative understanding. The environment is inhabited in the full sense, which includes all aspects of human life: understanding, praxis, sociability, absentmindedness. Public and semi-public spaces do not offer themselves just for errands or work; inevitably they become places of memory and attachment, explored and returned to as key points in our structuring of the society of which we are part. That buildings appear in an anonymous and fragmented way - without our knowing when and by whom they were built, without grasping the whole - is of less consequence since they are, more importantly, constitutive parts of an urban, social tissue, which is itself both continuous and known only in some parts.

Evidently, the social axis of existence is relevant in reflecting not only on housing areas, but also in general for buildings that serve functions belonging to the maintenance of life, to care, reproduction, household or play: hospitals and schools, as well as restaurants, bars, swimming baths, sports grounds. In the former, the representational function is accentuated: a communal hospital suggests a view of the suffering body. In the latter, play-related spaces, a purpose, or a particular kind of activity mixes with general sociability. While these spaces serve functions, they are also frequented to provide companionship, the possibility of meeting others, observing them or communicating with them, even aimlessly. Spending time with others is indeed the most basic function of nonofficial public space, but since its social functionality is dependent on the possibilities for meeting as well as withdrawing from other individuals in a spontaneous manner, there can scarcely be any straightforward way of optimizing this function. A high-level of user-friendliness may become user-unfriendly when it denies people the possibility to use space in their own way.

In a given, inhabited built environment, aesthetics of construction and aesthetics of maintenance together create the immediately perceptible appearance of the area, to which the perceiver's experiences, knowledge and preconceptions about the inhabitants add a touch. The urban environment is a fabric not only materially, in Rossi's sense, being continuously built and rebuilt, but also socially, in the practices of dwelling where meaning is created and recreated. It is in the social dimension, more than anywhere else, that the city is plural and heterogeneous, a world of worlds, and yet despite this heterogeneity any individual might feel oppressed by the city, when it is experienced as a mass of others, or uncanny, for reasons which may have nothing to do with architecture. This speaks for providing spaces of recess, but also for accepting that public spaces may be occupied by certain groups. A socially mixed environment is humanly richer and less dangerous, in the long run, than a homogeneous one.

The street remains the foremost urban area of anonymity and social mix, a scene for self-presentation which is disinterested in the sense that it is not meant for specific persons or groups, a "presentation for disposal which in our societies remains the only trace of primitive community", to borrow an phrase from Chemetov[50]. Of course, we do not dispose of others nor put ourselves for their disposal in the way goods can be disposed; in encountering and observing others and displaying ourselves we dispose imaginatively of the social scene, which offers insights into the breadth and depth of the social spectrum. To walk through the streets of a city, familiar and unfamiliar, frightening, strange, or comfortable, is to confirm both general human presence in these areas and one's personal participation, not just in the environment as built space, but also in society as a plurality of social experience. Looks and sounds, gestures and smells of and around people indicate features and qualities which cannot, perhaps should not, be articulated verbally - because that may mean classifying and simplifying. The presence of others, even if they remain anonymous and do not address us, is an undeniable reality, felt by the body and dealt with in different ways by our conscious selves. We may turn away and reject them, but this only shows that they concern us.

Even a built environment empty of other people is replete with traces of human activities. Buildings were constructed, paths and streets are there for transportation: practicability indeed permeates all human artefacts. This does not mean that we pay attention to these features; rather, they are silently there, unquestioned. But artefacts are not only there to be used, they were also used and are worn and torn. On the pavement, on cars, on door handles we can see and feel a silent history of use which is so basic and evident that it blends with life itself, rather than with particular functions. The degree and character of human presence in empty but inhabited built environments varies. Brickwork displays, for example, human work in a very different manner from that of prefabricated building, due to our knowledge of building techniques but also to apparent, suggestive qualities. Articulated details and ornaments expressive of human values remind us of responsibilities taken and of our own (relative) freedom in deciding how to build and think and dwell.

The expressivity of details, particularly technical, can be quite direct and independent of art historical knowledge. A brick is the size of a hand,

and on a plastered surface its unevenness displays the imperfection and concreteness of human activities. It is scarcely too daring to suggest that the quality of the less-than-perfect, which is evident in handmade wares, is today valued more than before because it has become a scarcity value. The perfection of machine-made artefacts is unquestionable, but therefore dull and uninteresting: it does not display the striving for form, control and beauty which is evident in the imperfection of hand-crafted goods. Care and concern, qualities of labour in the sphere of reproduction and maintenance of life, are becoming less perceptible in a world of prefabricated goods. In a doorhandle forged by a smith anonymity means namelessness, but not inhumanity. In its machine-made counterpart anonymity becomes neutrality and indifference, detachment from the human body as both fabricator and user. In this situation one strategy of design, in order to cover the inhuman neutrality of objects, seems to be the adding of a narrative dimension to objects of use[51] . But this blocks and fills up the space of personal life. Acquired individuality of an object or an environment is a result of convergent and divergent processes of fabrication and use, and is deep and opaque in a sense which a merely visual, artificial complexity is not. The insight of the limits and particularity of our knowledge gives access and creates depth and fascination, not the abundance of meaning.

The concreteness of the tectonic is due to the presence and display of technical functions. A load-bearing column is not primarily form but performance, which is not to deny that constructive functions may become motives in the self-representation of the building[52] . When a column supports the building this is an immanent and immediate function, here and now. To focus on construction is, thus, not just to focus on the technical aspect of building, it is also to focus on the undeniable presence and particularity of site and material, on the material reality of buildings and construction. In addition to being expressive of specific intentions and values that accompany the conception of the habitat at a particular time, work perceived to be of human origin functions as a reminder of the physical effort of construction, an effort shared with our bodily existence.

On the basis of the foregoing, the humane quality of an environment cannot be decided only by reflecting on meaning that can be identified and spelled out. A humane environment, an environment suitable for dwelling, should provide space not just for our projective being-towards-the-world, but also for nameless enjoyment and feeling, being-in and being-with, aimlessly and in rest. Such an experience is not the prerogative of children, fools, or dreamers, but an essential dimension of existence. Public spaces, whether in housing areas or in institutions of care, should provide possibilities not just for encountering and communicating with others, but also for being silently with them, without approaching. The ideal to strive for, in the social dimension, is not the best possible knowledge of one's community, but a degree of comfort which includes respect for the integrity and the basically unknown character of others and of oneself.

Spaces and buildings may be more or less receptive towards the individuals who inhabit and visit them. A receptive building gives room for the individuality of its inhabitants and visitors. It need not and cannot do this through offering a wide variety of impulses, for that variety would never be ample enough. But when a building is experienced as pleasant, even beautiful because of its atmosphere, this is also not typically because it conveys some particular feeling. Rather, the building seems receptive to different moods, and while it does not force its own emotional states upon us, it is as if ready to listen to us and receive our feelings without intruding. Again, there is a decisive distinction between the neutrality and indifference which turns its back on us and the nameless but friendly anonymity one can experience with animals, in nature, and in some built spaces.

The way materials reflect natural light, the views from and inside a building, the acoustic and olfactory qualities are certainly among the factors that create receptivity. These sensuous aspects have an emotional, but also a cognitive side, such that it is hard to distinguish the two. Standing in a hall, one can feel deserted and left at the mercy of unknown inhabitants by the unpredictability of the building. That can be the case if there is a feeling of being seen without seeing, and not being able to hear who approaches. But there are also spaces which make us feel both sociable and at ease, with a possibility of seeing and an inoffensiveness of being seen, since no one can steal up to us without our noticing it. A certain orderliness of a built space is thus a value also in the social dimension, although it is not so important to be able to locate and identify what goes on where; on the contrary, it is sometimes important not to know, and to accept this. The same qualities that make it easy to linger in a space, to wait for someone or for one's turn, to read or think, also make it easy to approach other people. The attunement of the building to our sensory apparatus, in colours and sounds, make us feel acceptable and more confident also as individuals. But it must be noted that too much pleasance or luxury might have a contrary effect, suggesting that the building is meant for some, but not for all[53] .

While figurative ornaments can increase the space provided by an environment by enlarging the immediate towards an other world, ornaments may also decrease space by defining it. This is dependent on the type of building. A building which serves a specific function is already defined by that function, and ornamentation may then introduce interesting tensions. But in a building which serves purposes of dwelling, or what I call the social dimension of life, the function is not clearly defined. Gathering and communication can take place in many ways, but regardless of how it takes place, the individuality of those who gather and their way of doing things should be respected. Buildings which serve social life need not tell a story in their architecture, for in an area with some continuity among its inhabitants the building itself will probably become a generator and a store-room for narratives about place and community. By this, I am not claiming that strong expression or narratives displayed in community houses are bad, only that such strategies may be repressive if they serve a certain, defined conception of us, but do not provide space for change, participation and difference.

Movable decorative elements inevitably become part of dwelt-in spaces through their inhabitants. To appropriate space through decoration is to play with the interaction of oneself and environment, to be present by proxy even when one is away, and to observe how the spaces receive the elements one puts into them. Some movable elements may belong to the building. More importantly, the people who inhabit a space, by scattering clothes and other items around, giving off sounds and movement, modify the character of the space in their own manner. This is inevitable and enriching. Comfort is the background of lived space, but built space without inhabitants has only potential character, and its precise atmosphere arises only in interaction with inhabitants.

Even if a built space is not suggestive of mythical time or history in its forms, details or figurative elements, it may be felt as suggestive of another, archaic or future world. Imagination is often inevitable in our experience of architecture, and there is no reason why it should not be there. But there is a difference, which may be a fine line, between defining the building through decoration and experiencing it as suggestive. As noted earlier, built spaces inevitably modify our ideas of institutions and of ourselves, but this modification remains enriching and inspiring only as long as it is suggestive, rather than declamatory or defining. The creative state is one of doubt in one's own beliefs, not one of conviction about one's own correctness and the incorrectness of what others think or what was thought earlier. Imagination can be stirred by a building, so that one becomes aware of other possibilities of being.

There is an inevitability of character in dwelt-in spaces, whether in- or outdoors, since the affective is one dimension of human existence. Like atmosphere and character the narrative content of an environment is in the final instance dependent on inhabitants, for it is primarily with humans, not with buildings, that we live and interact[54]. While recognizability is certainly valuable in buildings of any kind, it need not be established through spectacular means. A better strategy than dealing with the environment as a cartoon strip, where the only way of making a difference is to stand out visually, is to conceive of recognizability as a question of individuation, of supporting existing differences, of respecting heterogeneity and continuity of inhabitants and environment which are often not perceptible to an observer from outside.

In apartment houses even the "misuse" of a building, its adaptation by inhabitants to their needs and wishes, even against what was planned, should be accepted at least in some cases. For buildings are not just objects of design, but also personal space. In housing areas or in any public space, the socially unplanned - wear and tear, artefacts and footsteps - is parallel to the naturally unplanned. Indicating human life, it also indicates plurality and individuality, as both real and possible. Further, the unplanned, as the

unintended, may introduce if not zones, then at least elements of rest, proofs that the undemanding still exists and that a human being is sometimes allowed to move through an environment without being addressed or stimulated.

Belonging rather than identity, the site considered as impure material and the acknowledgement of the "impossibility of any natural coincidence with the site" do not imply, as Gregotti makes clear, that architecture is given up. On the contrary, the courage to build, in conflict and tension - since a harmony of every element is illusory - is the only way of "making contact with the earth, with the physical environment, with the idea of nature as the totality of all existing things."[55] Natural and cultural diversity may here become parallel and supportive of each other.

Cultivated and wild

the earth is still there to hold us and keep us while we tinker with our broken creations[56]

A total change of mentality is needed if we are to be able to enter a world that will accept us and lets us live as fellows with equal respect.[57]

Any human habitat is built into nature and surrounded by nature. Even in a large and polluted city the ground and the climate belong to nature, although the inhabitants may not notice this in their daily lives. Nature still defines the conditions of building, but our relation to built culture and nature has become more indirect and nature itself, as a consequence, increasingly invisible. The limits set on existence by the elements that make it possible are not easy to perceive; as with so many other aspects of contemporary life, our relation to them is one of detached knowledge rather than full experience.

In this discussion nature is relevant on many levels. Human habitation is in and with nature, and its inhabitants creatures of nature. From sky and earth one can look to trees or to stonework, to weathering or to the play of light on a wall, everywhere making or perceiving contact with the transforming forces of nature. The existential relevance of this for the aesthesiological, embodied, perceiving and reflecting subject should be evident. Conviviality, continuity, and reconciliation are qualities related to living in and with nature, without denial of either finitude or the infinite.

I shall start with the situated body, and then move to the settings in which this body lives with other bodies. The utopian elements are related to an aesthetics of interaction in which the built environment is open to more than just human action and calculation. A continuum extending from cultivated to wild runs parallel to the existential and at both ends - culture and nature - we find instances of finite and infinite, of articulated and inarticulate, of vitality and decay, of care and negligence. Looking at nature and human culture together, similarities in the forms of life between us and other species become apparent, and it is in the spirit of appropriateness, appropriation and adaptation that I shall look at human dwelling. In our age it is hard not to note, but important to explicitly mention, that nature, whether as ground or resource, is finite. This might be the truth of the "question of technology"[58], but its consequences have not been taken seriously. The problem today is not an excess of management but a poor understanding of what is managed: not just abstract resources, but concrete, particular, unique and irreplaceable areas and habitats.

Some of the themes, such as technique, which come up in the following, have been discussed in relation to the social dimension, but they are now seen as appearing independently of a specific social and cultural context. While natural elements are influenced by culture and appear in culture, they are not produced by culture. Nature's existential significance is due to its being other than human culture, unintended by us; and as something else besides, or a limit to culture, nature may become a cultural value[59]. But even regardless of this, the existential dimension is not ruled by practicability. To touch a wooden railing, to be blinded by sunlight when stepping outside a building, to listen to the rain against the roof are experiences which do not lead anywhere except into themselves, into the elements and flesh of the world. Competence is cancelled, and we are closer to contemplation than praxis: contemplation as a giving-in of oneself to what is before and around. Such a moment or strand of experience is non-conceptual, it is sensuous opening, not conceptual grasping; yet, and for this reason, it questions us and teaches us to ask. Here experience is not of limits, but a temporary cancellation of every limit.

That kind of experience is, paradoxically, both an experience of self to setting and an experience of being freed from immediate concerns, historical situation and social identity, such that these lose relevance[60]. It is reality that is experienced as strongly present: the undeniable existence of a tangible, perceptible world, in the face of which the experiencer becomes aware of the limits of her knowledge and power. Such an experience may, depending on world view and culture, become integrated in a particular belief system, but in the experience itself, mute innocence and wonder prevail. This situatedness and feeling of hereness can take us beyond history and society, our own roles included. The setting of nature effects a temporary loss of social identity and essence, but a gain in existence. This is one of the reasons for the invigorating and liberating effect of nature on human beings: the possibility to get away, which allows us to return with fresh eyes. When nature is the setting - whether in a natural or in an urban environment - the self is, thus, a creature rather than a citizen. Yet the cosmic touches the intimate, for it is through our own temporal and finite existence that we are aware of spatial and temporal infinity.

In the vicinity of cities, it is today hard to find areas of nature where culture is not perceptibly present. Lights and sounds, sometimes smells of

urban life permeate large areas, so that one need not be an expert to understand a changed relation of dominance between humankind and the rest of the ecosystem. Still nature appears everywhere, as earth, organisms, activities, traces or movement, which are perceptible and indicate the presence of a living force. This is so particularly in the context of everyday existence, for while it makes sense to see weather as mechanically - although not totally predictably - caused by a global system in the scientific context of meteorology, in everyday experience the wind is still brisk or gentle, aggressive or stimulating as it touches our bodies. We experience natural phenomena in personal relations, which means that nature is experienced as a force confronting us: not a somebody, but a something. With the most dramatic and self-assertive natural elements this is emphasized: tornadoes are given names, as are mountains and lakes.

However, if nature represents the opposite of the artefactual and human-made as well as a counterforce to culture, it is also, as elements and forces, a companion and support of culture. The only way to live is to live with nature, not against it. This is true for the material sustenance of life and has been true for culture, although there are today tendencies of breaking free from the world of nature into a space which is artificial through and through. But one can ask what freedom such a liberation can bring, if it is accompanied by forgetting nature? For it seems that nature, as appearing and experienced, has had a privileged role in sustaining culture: giving materials, access and space to the life of feeling and imagination[61]. The way nature incessantly gives off more material for perception than we can take in and this material becomes experienced as part of a landscape's sensuous texture and character, the movements of nature, its life and moods, brings it close to those dimensions of human existence which are not ruled by goal-directed behaviour. The very transitoriness of the natural environment stimulates an imaginative interaction between perceiver and environment, all the more so since there are no given frames. We are confronted directly, unmediatedly, with existential and even metaphysical questions, although we are of course not forced to pay attention to them. And even if we restrict our attention to the immediate, perceptible environment life is everywhere, with tensions, conflicts and decay as well as natality and blooming.

In appreciating nature we appropriate it, but as Hepburn points out, it "need not be misperceived in order to furnish symbols for our inwardness"[62]. Appropriation is belonging, not exclusive ownership; we are present to and simultaneous with but not presented with something we could conceptually grasp. If an artefact faces us as a creation with traces of human agency and subjectivity, of the someone who made it into what it is, a natural item is in a similar way expressive of processes which we do not know in their full, concrete complexity. To be sure, there are differences between artefacts and natural things, intentionality being the most apparent. But the individuality of natural items, organisms, sites, even of the way natural processes have moulded a rock or a façade, is a similarity that is often overlooked.

This gives depth to natural phenomena, makes them ineffable in a way which need have nothing mystic about it, yet is a reminder of the limits of knowledge when it comes to particular reality, to things being what they are and having become what they are. Further, although we like to think that artefacts are formed according to a will, it might be useful to remember that in many things, art works included, the resistance of materials to human intentions is as important for the end result as those intentions.

If individuality is one similarity between natural things and artefacts, otherness is another. But the otherness of nature - considered globally as the forces at work in the environment, on buildings, in plants and bodies - is not primarily one of individuals, as it is among humans and expressive human artefacts. Nature's otherness is plural. However, in distinction from artefacts, it is also vital: directly and permanently present. One might indeed ask whether incessant energy is not one of nature's main features with regard to its existential significance for humans. Aliveness makes nature a quasi-subject, and in this sense an animistic relation to the environment is unquestionable[63].

In spite of environmental degradation, nature is still the unknowable, external, uncontrollable, that which cannot be created, although it is manipulated, managed, studied, admired and eaten. For the human experiencer, nature is most apparently other in sudden outbursts, unexpected weather, dramatic changes. This also means that nature remains other in relation to the human body regardless of how much science explains the mechanisms that lie behind the perceptible. Here praxis becomes relevant, for it is in acting against or with nature, in coping in nature that we most vividly experience its otherness as a present counterforce and quasi-subjectivity. Against such experiences, it is meaningless to claim that nature is only the opposite of culture but lacks, in itself, positive substance. Likewise, such otherness cannot become incorporated into culture, although it gives us alternatives of, for example, generous encounter or aggressive subdual.

The resistance of nature, which implies that it cannot be owned and disposed of as goods are, makes it a moral resource. "[T]hrough feeling resistance, the body is roused to take note of the world in which it lives"[64]. To manage nature is to manage with nature, and mistakes in the first lead to failure in the second, as our civilization demonstrates. Management can only be successful if it accepts the interdependence of manager and managed. To perceive nature as other - whether this is based in personal experience or philosophical argument - may be necessary, as has been argued, for specifying limitations to human action. But to see nature as other is not to see it as an other. When it comes to the 'rights' of nature or to the idea of a 'natural contract' we must remember that in these processes only one part is actually heard: the human[65]. Nature remains beyond rational negotiations, as a limit and foundation of society. But the asymmetry of the relationship between human beings and nature, where decisions and responsibility fall on the human part, while the possibilities for life are in nature, only emphasizes the importance of the latter. Also for such reasons, it is better to approach the management of ecosystems in terms of responsibility, not rights. The otherness of nature is thus preserved, also as a condition for respectful interaction, but without assuming that a human can switch the perspective and talk with the voice of nature. Such an assumption, in fact, would imply a return to the hubris of posing humankind as the crown of nature, on top of, not as part of the global ecosystems.

In an active interaction of human with nature labour is present and felt as resistance in the body touching the environment and the environment touching the body. As has been noted, nature as substance, material or energy opposes human projects and obstructs human activities. But in addition to the ethical importance of the dawning awareness of the scale and position of each person as individual and body in a concrete, yet transcendent reality, labour and felt resistance also create pleasure and satisfaction related to skills and to the fulfilment of tasks. The enjoyment of carrying out a work would be nil without the awareness of its difficulty, of what it takes to do it. The body feels at ease in its efforts.

Gilles Deleuze describes our lost belief in the world, and suggests a restored belief in the body "as in the germ of life, the seed which splits open the paving-stones ... and which bears witness to life, in this world as it is"[66]. This 'ethic of faith' would be about trusting the world and of feeling its reality. For it is clear that the enjoyment of work is not just an enjoyment of accomplishing things but also of doing them, of giving oneself 'out', thrust into work - a body put to work and into work. Similar somatic experiences may be had in different forms of exercise, with the difference that in these we do not participate in an activity which is meaningful, in the same way, in a larger context or for others[67]. Also, the effort of exercise is freely chosen and can therefore not make one feel the limits of the situation as necessary and given; rather, the limits concern only myself, and the general, abstract capacity of my body is temporary and can be nullified at any time.

But to return, interacting with nature in labour also brings feelings of freedom and of sheer enjoyment in the sensational touch of the elements. The pleasure felt when exposing one's body in work or in getting from one place to another is not only a pleasure of work, but also a disinterested enjoyment[68]. On the sea, pleasures of this kind are present - incommensurable with the hardship of fishing - and also in agriculture in its non-industrialized forms. Through interaction with nature in such practices, one gets to know local nature intimately, as one knows one's family, having grown up in its lap, and so it is a way of being on terms with rather than controlling life; being at home, whether comfortably or uncomfortably, in a situation. Elements of truth and knowledge are present (one knows how things work), but more importantly the feeling of reality: that the world, or nature, is alive here, at this place, at this moment, in this process, and including me.

To observe nature and reflect on it may be a way to channel and articulate one's wonder at life in its different human and non-human, social and asocial forms. As Hargrove and Ehrenfeld have shown, this aesthetic dimension used to be an important part of natural science[69]. Further, it means that nature not only offered itself as an object of study, but also offered material for the articulation of morals. In this respect, more important than narratives based on nature is the hope which is suggested by nature's vitality and fullness. 'Natality', a notion to which Hannah Arendt gives a central place in human society, is most evidently and primarily displayed by nature. For Arendt, natality is essentially connected to the human subject's capacity to act politically and in acting with others establish meaning afresh. But the image of natality originates with the birth of a child as the coming forth of a life that cannot be predicted and controlled, but is new and of its own kind.[70] Arendt also notes that the "character of unexpected startlingness is inherent in all beginnings and in all origins (...) the new therefore always appears in the guise of a miracle"[71].

In addition to the novelty and unpredictability of beginnings, one may also see, in natality, the givenness and inevitability of life, which means that there will always be other lives and lives of others around us. Natality implies plurality and diversity, and if it accompanies us through life, as Arendt thinks, as the possibility to start anew, it also indicates that there is otherness in ourselves: unknown possibilities, hidden resources, of which some only fuel us forward without ever rising to the surface. The otherness inherent in the notion of natality is both vital and vulnerable, having to do with the generation and diversity of life, human and non-human. Responsibility must, then, be respectful of this: a letting-be rather than a definition of what the other is and what is best for him. In Arendt's thinking on human life, the distinction of appearance and performance, on the one hand, and privacy, on the other, is important. What is shared and public may become the target of even aggressive intellectual combat, but it is not all there is to a human being[72]. I have emphasized the otherness inherent in natality, suggesting that even if it is on the surface, in appearance, it is not from the surface, in order to show a similarity to Levinas' notion of infinity. Infinity cannot be understood through images of spatial or temporal extension but is an infinity of always beginning again, in the finite[73]. For a finite being, the relation of finite and infinite demands that she stay where she is, in her proper place, and act from there[74]. The infinite, to Levinas, appears as what cannot and will not be limited to any identity, any attempt to circumscribe what the other is. Thus it becomes an absolute demand for responsibility but also a ban against trying to totalize or appropriate the other.

Arendt's (secular) notion of 'natality' and Levinas' 'infinite' - which he sometimes writes with a capital I - are not identical, and neither of them applies these ideas to our experience of nature. But as noted already, in Arendt it is the natural world which provides natality, which she then uses to describe the political. Levinas' thinking appears more distant from the world of nature. But if those aspects of ourselves which bring us, experientially, close to nature - our capacity for sensing and feeling, vulnerability, embodiment, the non-rationalizable sides of ourselves - are seen as integral, irreplaceable parts of human existence, as Levinas does, then it seems that nature itself should not and cannot be expelled as ethically irrelevant from the understanding of human existence[75]. Already in nature, natality is given, and the infinite appears and shows itself. Thus, as John Sallis describes it, the appearance or "shining" of stone is the shining of the earth, of what supports us and was always already there, and will continue to be: a ground beyond calculation[76].

If there are beginnings in nature and in human life, there are also ends and endings; not just the final stops, the moments when life freezes and is then irrevocably gone, but also dying as suffering, "transsubstantiation from activity to passivity", and materialization[77]. The process of aging may be seen as a dying away and can, from that perspective, be described as an increase of entropy, similar to ruination[78]. But there is reason to ask how relevant this perspective is in reflecting on human habitats and life, for with increasing age, there is also an increase in the individuality of the organism, and often in the built place. Due to experiences and acquired habits the animal, becoming older, becomes more itself, not primarily in its looks, but in its total way of being. Becoming itself does not mean to be true to a cherished identity or a given essence: self means, here, the acquired and given totality of what we are and in which we are unique and different from others, despite the innumerable similarities which constitute ties between us. Such a notion of individuality is applicable also to building and built places, which only with time, through natural and social processes, acquire an overall quality of temporal depth, a patinated appearance. Here the natural site, however, may rescue the human habitat from the rawness and neutrality of the brand-new. If a building respects the site, entering a dialogue with local nature - topography, biotopes, climate - rather than asserting itself against it, it may from the start stand before us in individuality.

To say that aging or time increases individuality is true as long as these processes are thought of in terms of growth, life processes, renewal, change, formation. In an environment, whether natural or built, there is no point at which this increase in individuality turns into a decrease. With living organisms - and individual artefacts, whether they be small things or buildings - the case is different. At some point form is lost, personality disappears; or the building becomes frail, dangerous, unusable, no longer a habitat, but only the remnants of one. On the systemic level of nature life and death are not opposites; each death is part of an ever changing totality, each death also feeds that which remains. But in a human habitat, where the interests of our species are given priority, culture and nature become engaged in a dialectic where nature can be seen to attack and eat away on structures erected in the hope of permanence. Nature destroys the identity of buildings, even if it gives them another life as ruins, where imagination is stirred through imposed ignorance, in blurred contours and suggestions which refuse to become precise[79].

Humans are not just bearers of culture, we also belong to nature, as the technosphere is included in the biosphere[80]. It would be simplifying to remain content with the opposition of building and nature as one of construction and decay, where building represents the coming into being of a new thing - natality - and nature effects the destruction, or death of that thing. Construction may also, especially in reconstruction and conservation, become a supporter of death against life, stasis against change. Here Freud's suggestions about *eros* and *thanatos*, the libido and the death drive, are illuminating. Considered as shelter and habitat, a building is related to the protection of life, activities, creation; thus we find, on the erotic side of construction, the provision of spaces which allow things to continue and change, sympathy and openness towards life and the world, as well as a willingness to engage and participate. In its symbolic and representational aspects construction may, on the other hand, become thanathetic, as when a monument is posited as eternal, static, untouched by life and devoid of tension and dynamic energy. Such a monument can be seen as expressive of a will to rescue what is symbolized from the flow of time, but then there is the paradox of stable identity: as something is saved it is also killed[81]. To preserve a meaning by giving it a fixed form, or putting it into that form, may be to delimit and separate it from life. Separated, it will gradually lose the meaning it originally had, without a chance to acquire new contextual meaning. A monument of this kind is not meaningless, but it is severed from the immediate, living context in which it nevertheless stands. It does not communicate or interact but preaches the same sermon, again and again, as a repetitive representation.[82] Compared to this strategy of fighting decay one which allows for changes, which after all are conditions for continuity, seems more fruitful, promising "not survival (...) but a new life that takes the noble form of memory"[83]. There is, then, acceptance of the unexpected and new, but also of the inevitability of loss.

The continuity of life may be felt as threatening because it does not care for identity as it could be articulated at any one moment: vitality opposes static form, and is thus close to decay. But if to rescue an object or a place for eternity is to freeze it - as a sepulchral monument over its own, by then finished life - this is not a recommendable strategy either. However, it must be remembered that it is always the individual that is threatened by decay, while on the systemic level, life continues. These levels clarify the question of vitality and decay in built and natural environments. On the systemic level, growth and decay are inseparable, although environments may have more or less life and vitality; on the individual level, entities assert themselves, develop and die, so that life and death are opposite forces. The latter is where cultural meaning most often is articulated into built forms, which are individual and local. Buildings may, as art, science, or other creative cultural practices, save us from the oppressing thought of our individual death as the definite end. We may leave some traces in culture or society, in objects which do not end in the way we do. The desire to build a house, make a fortune, create a company, write a book or found a family can be seen in this light, as ways of securing if not a life, then at least some kind of existence after death[84]. Another answer to the fear of death would be to accept that while I disappear, we survive. Building, in this perspective, would be less assertive and more attuned to its environment, historically and spatially.

On the other hand, if adaptation to the existing context and tradition is presented as a sole recommendation and criterion of building, its utopian potential and affirmative function is forgotten and the complexity of the human condition betrayed. In human existence, the systemic and the individual perspectives illuminate the same concrete world, where processes of growth and decay and attitudes of acceptance and protest are simultaneously present. In other words, it is scarcely possible and there is also no reason to give up the individual perspective in favour of the systemic, where each individual is only part of a larger whole. The solace of the choice of the whole seems illusory, for it falsely gives the impression that one is only part of something bigger and this, but only seemingly, liberates one from responsibility. Since each part makes a difference, the intention to make no difference can strengthen the *status quo* and weaken the dynamic of the whole, indicating that differences do not exist or that they are unimportant. To indicate that naturally and socially unplanned processes are part of the built and experienced environment is not a recommendation to favour them, but only to accept them as part of a whole which remains vital and dynamic only if it includes individual assertiveness and oppositions.

It is important to point to those dimensions and levels of human existence which are unarticulated, non-conceptual, non-cognitive: the sensuous, somatic, material. This field, which is one ground of existence, may be pointed to as the anonymous *there is*, amorphous, abject, or elemental substantiality. Such mute substantiality is undoubtedly full and yet, from the point of view of the knowing subject, it is nothing, it does not speak to me; is, but is nothing in particular, not any thing. Nature natures, but does not speak. However, is there not a dialectic between this basis and human action, a relation which Levinas perhaps overlooks? Is not the felt reality of that unarticulated field, at least in part, that it frightens and stirs us into action, makes us grasp for things, meaning and company? In a like manner, a decayed building may make us turn, in our minds, to saw and hammer, paintbrush and paint. Patina and weathering are, on the other hand, at their best on a building which asserts itself, still standing, walls upright, against the ages, against the wear of climate and humans.

To maintain a building demands work, and physical work is a giving of one's body to the world.[85] To till the soil or erect a house, or to take care of land and buildings is to take responsibility for land as locality; such activities are place-making. The heavy and tired body is not attached to reality in general, but to a particular reality[86]. The same is true for pleasant experiences. When the sun warms or dries a body it always happens here, at the same time as sensuous experience in one sense takes us beyond personality[87].

To go out into nature takes us outside social roles and citizenship in a felt freedom which is without limits rather than at the limits, but not delocalized[88]. In lived reality, sensuous experience is always on the spot. This kind of limitlessness also involves proximity, or a presence which does not imply conceptually grasped totalities. As Gabriel Josipovici describes it, "[i]ts presence to you, but also your presence to it. The doubleness is crucial."[89] He also calls upon Walter Benjamin's discussions of the aura of an object, which is related to "our sense of the uniqueness of the moment" and which means, with Benjamin's words, that we "invest [the object] with the capacity to look at us in return"[90]. This kind of proximity or double presence might train our ability to disaffirm, to doubt particular statements as well as the scope of our cognitive capacity in general, and to sense that knowledge is limited. Further, to go out into a park, or into the silent space of a museum or a concert hall, also makes it possible to return to one's work and projects, family and society.

In its moments of proximity, in withdrawing, whether consciously or not, from the praktognostic attitude, the experience of environment can also be characterized as innocent. Feeling rather than knowing, the subject does not judge, which does not mean that he is inexperienced or faultless. Innocence is, rather, a state of mind, close to naivity in its radical openness, which becomes possible when the subject does not aim towards grasping a truth or positing a hypothesis about an object of thought. For this reason, the experience is also untouched by the unfolding of historical time, propelled by human projects, and may function as a reminder of the illusion of control and the sovereignty of management. As Ladelle McWhorter points out, guilt may be a "maneouver of self-defense"[91]. In such cases, "[i]ndulging in feelings of guilt" is "telling ourselves that we really could have done differently (...) if only we had stuck closer to the principles of good management". One then refuses "to hear the real message, the message that human beings are not, never have been, and never can be in complete control"[92]. Innocence is closely related to the notion of disinterestedness and is, as double presence, focused on the subject's status as much as on the kind of attention directed at the object.

While judgement does not belong with innocent or disinterested openness, the latter is a prerequisite for fair reflection, judgement and management. For it is only by admitting that the environment transcends the scope of any calculation that management can be given a proper place alongside managed reality; not, as is the case today, a sovereign and unquestioned status as management of the whole earth[93]. Management as such is not the problem, for it is inevitable; the contemporary problems of management are related to its form and to the expectations and fallacies that accompany it. One problem is, thus, the equating of environmental management with ownership and total control, without questioning its possibility or ethical dimensions. Another is that land and waters are dealt with as resources, in terms of abstract quantity, while forgetting that nature is site and locality,

not just classifiable species. Today's human societies consume not just products of nature, which often are renewable, but also ground, land, individual place, and one of the most important activities in this devouring consumption is building. An insight of management is that resources are finite, but an accompanying fallacy lies in treating the earth as an abstract storehouse of resources, where the consequences of use can be calculated. Instead of use and enjoyment, exploitation today dominates human activities.

Maximization of profits tends to rely on short-term calculation and is therefore hardly reconcilable with ideas of neighbouring or environmental friendship[94]. These require reciprocity, the ability not just to project but also to listen to the place and live open to the unfamiliar[95]. This would require a long-term relationship of intimacy between human beings and the environment, where the natural dimension of ourselves is integrated with cultivating a place. In Thomas A. Davis' poetic words, "the source of such a gesture (...) comes upon one as a rhythm of use by which the thriving of life calls for the thriving of the human as mortal"[96]. It is worth pointing out that the continuity which is recognizable in a rhythm of use or in the thriving of life does not demand that each individual stays where he was born; it is the evolving patterns of culture, collective and heterogeneous that should be respected, and these rather call for movement and change of place among individuals. Continuity does not repress but gives room for individuality, because it respects the temporal dimension which is necessary for relating to the future as well as to the past.

In the aesthetics of interaction demanded by the balance of culture and nature, as cultivated and wild, natural vitality is certainly one of the central qualities. Discussing more concrete matters of building, I suggest that it be kept in mind as a general value-increasing quality, pertinent to the natural-existential dimension of life. In a built environment, vitality can exist on many levels and in many forms, but the idea is not to make it dependent on an increase in the quantity of species or the perceptible intensity of life. Overpopulation and noise make an environment less habitable, not more, to mention only two examples. Natural vitality has to do with the appearance of living organisms: humans, animals, vegetation form a first reference group. They introduce movement and change, sounds and smells in the environment. Secondly, natural vitality has to do with the receptivity of built structures to natural processes. Here texture and the relation to the ground and to the surrounding landscape are important. Thirdly, the natural vitality of an environment is dependent on its perceived habitability. In this respect, one may notice that some environments allow changes and growth, while others do not.

Not all potential changes add natural vitality, although they may add another kind of vitality. Namely, in addition to natural vitality, which is related to the actual or virtual presence of life, an environment may expose the symbolic vitality of a sculpture or an overpass, or the vitality of motorized traffic flowing through a city[97]. I want to point out that I shall not deal with these, and that they typically, in their contemporary forms, are counterproductive to natural vitality. This is due not least to their mass and quantity, which makes them threats to dynamic balance and plurality, to the presence of many life forms and many species, in continuous change, which is typical of the natural environment (the paradigm of vitality). Secondly, contemporary technological vitality is typically hostile to the human body, whose sensuous, situated presence is necessary for understanding the aesthetic experience of the environment generally, and absolutely central when the focus is on the natural dimension of human existence.

Building construction and technique demonstrate a relation of culture to nature which can be partly intentional, but is partly unintentional. As an object of aesthetic scrutiny, technique thus parallels nature, which also displays rather than expresses a certain functionality: how things are performed in a particular system. In studying the technical side of building with an eye on its displayed relation to nature, a key question is about the character of the boundary area "where something begins its presencing"[98]. This particular boundary shows the human species as balancing and vacillating at a limit which was always there. But if balancing used to be necessary for keeping us separate enough from the rest of nature, so that it would not devour us, balancing is today necessary for reconciliation since our separation is causing deaths and breakdowns in the system which in the final instance sustains us.

All species interact with and change their environment. Humans have always dwelt in and by nature, themselves creatures of nature. But the question of interaction versus exploitation becomes increasingly critical the more we rely on artefacts, as the "element of violation and violence is present in all fabrication, and *homo faber*, the creator of the human artifice, has always been a destroyer of nature"[99]. Animals and plants also create or constitute cultures and destroy what is strange to them: life forms are destructive of each other. But the case of humans is different because of the pace, scale, and irreversibility of the impact of contemporary human activities on the biosphere. There is a limit after which force becomes violence; another after which it becomes destruction.

Science in the modern age relies on action, on interfering and intervening with nature. Men were no longer content with "deceptive appearances": "in order to know one had to do".[100] In the secular, modern approach, immediate and concrete reality is devalued. The idea of truth as transcendent in relation to sensuous reality had not had this effect, for although God or the highest principle is not directly perceptible in nature, nature is still His creation and part of a sacred whole[101]. This idea then stands as a limit to human agency. The advantages of modern science cannot be denied, but when science becomes a dominant paradigm for understanding relations of humans and environment it betrays everyday experience, which is not directed at knowing the mechanisms behind the appearing but tries to come to terms with a given reality. In that reality, nature is a companion, but also

a source of spiritual and bodily nourishment, experienced at a level of individual situations and items: landscapes, trees, carrots, rabbits or rocks. A further problem with the technical spirit is its value-neutrality; that it is, with Max Weber's term, steered through instrumental rationality. The circling eye of this Cyclops is totalizing but also directionless; as in the *Odyssey*, a nameless monster. Technological progress is today treated as an end in itself, despite its often horrifying consequences and strategies.

If control and conquest of nature, in some form, have always been a part of building in the West, it nevertheless seems that there was earlier a greater compatibility, equality and respect in the relations of humans and nature. This is indicated by the way conquered nature was figuratively present in building, personalized and perceptibly there as an other[102]. The relation to nature is, in such examples, intimate, and although there is repressed hostility, there is also acquired balance. In the architecture of rationalism, this balance is lost. In creating, the human being is emancipated from sensuous nature, which is left behind rational control and geometrical forms, which stand for a truer reality: Nature as abstract principle and law. Sensuous, uninformed nature now appears as simply strange and non-human, a mere object of human action, where it earlier was a necessary partner in action. In Boullée's project for a Temple to Nature and Reason, suggestively described by Sennett, "[i]t is impossible to climb down to this Nature from the colonnade, and no worshipper at this shrine of Nature would wish to touch the earth (...) There is no foothold here, on the ground, for man or woman."[103] Nature is, in this temple, doubly abstracted, for uninformed chaos and perfect forms are both exceptions in the everyday experience of concrete natural environments.

Nature in building can be presented in a formal or in a material way. In formal presentation, nature is represented, symbolized, articulated, at least in a preliminary way, although not necessarily controlled. In material presentation nature is allowed and received, not represented, in generosity. A building may be open to nature as what is around it or in it through its materials, in much the same way as a body is subjected to nature from within and without. This is closer to proximity than presence, and it gives up and replaces intention and control with adaptation. This generosity of building towards nature might suggest a different relation of humans and nature than that of control: a relation built on reciprocity, interdependence and a dynamic balance - in peace - rather than on competition and conquest, where the vulnerable balance is based on a continued use of force.

Even if one of the functions of building is to stand against devouring time, to offer shelter not just in the present, but also in that flow of life which is indifferent to individuals, there are different ways of doing this. The extreme alternatives are building as eternal monument, on the one hand, or as renewable fabric, on the other. The former is suitable for expressing the immortality of a single accomplishment or individual, but while it may be a constitutive part of history, it aims at separation from natural time. With respect to nature, and especially if conciliatory patterns and practices are sought for, the latter pole of the spectrum is more interesting.

In the context of the fabric or tissue of building, a single building may be constructed with the awareness that it will not stand forever. This attitude is typically found with vernacular building, but need not mean that the building is treated as an object of consumption. For the builder, himself finite, a finite span of time may be long enough. The building lasts its time. Further, that the built fabric is renewable also means that the single building may be so, either in parts or as a whole. The built fabric is not essentially individual buildings, but comprises a practice of building which is maintained through them and guarantees their maintenance. In many traditions of vernacular building, a building may be replaced by a similar, but not identical one. Mortality and continuity are shown to go hand in hand: a continuity of properties and principles, maintained by individuals but not dependent on any particular individual.

The built fabric implies different relations to history and memory from those implied by the monument, not the lack of such relations. Extreme in its kind, the Japanese shrine demonstrates one possibility. The structure is rebuilt in wood at regular intervals, in identical form. Material individuality is thus repressed; the material serves the built form and its cultural role, which is unchanging. Nevertheless, the shrine suggests that material existence cannot be eternal: eternity is an abstraction, an ideal, and is therefore in need of maintenance. More generally, for example in a tradition of wooden building, individual differences are welcomed in the overall frame of similar scale, technique and elements - boards and nails. The mnemonic function is reconciled with the passing of time, abstract ideas and patterns mediated and embodied in concrete objects and practices.

In such organic materials as stone, wood or straw, the passing of time is perceptible in the material itself, even before it is exposed to weathering or wear and tear as part of a building. Wood and straw show their grown character on their surface and in their form; stone is not even either, but marked by the geological processes behind its own making. Before withering, a wooden surface is wrinkled. In such surfaces an appeal, an imperative presence of an alterity of nature presents itself, not unlike the way this happens on the skin of another human being as a "surface of exposure" "which supports the signs of an alien intention"[104].

Contemporary buildings are typically alienated from the natural origin of their materials, and as a result, the material is synthetically uniform and dull, without surface and depth, without inside and outside. An oak chair is individual, a plastic one identical to others of its kind. This kind of alienation is analogous to what Karl Marx pointed to as the result of industrial production: one no longer knows how the object came into being. In the built environment, diminished possibilities for experiencing locality and natural circulation are one consequence. Here experience is decisive, not understanding in a strict sense, for one may experience, follow and even take part in processes one does not fully understand.

The building materials may direct attention not just to nature in general, as a storeroom for materials, but also to nature as locality. An understanding of nature where ecology is extended towards topography, with biotopes and topophilia[105], accompanies an approach of environmental aesthetics where the subject is taken to bodily and mentally inhabit the environment. Where the subject is at home, he has his domains, and here a relation between right (*dominion*) and dwelling may be seen to point, positively, to the limitation of rights to a certain area and to knowledge and familiarity as the conditions for such a right. What it also may suggest is, thus, that before deciding about changes to an area, one should know it intimately.

A building may or may not relate to the natural site on which it is built: through material, scale, attachment to the ground. Contemporary building typically ruins the natural site, digs up the ground, so that if the building is one day demolished, the site cannot be restored to what it was before construction. In such cases, there are no "bounds to technological appropriation", such as Sallis suggests as a possibility inherent in building on rock: no relation, only negation by the building of nature as ground or earth[106]. Clearly, it is not easy to define where the line should be drawn between relation and negation, interaction and one-sided exploitation. However, if respect for the integrity of a site is taken as one criterion, then permanent changes in the topography belong with exploitation. Another rule, less permanent and serious in its consequences for the ecosystem, if violated, is the principle not to build higher than the tree tops[107]. More generally, it belongs with the idea that a building should not break the overall scale of a landscape. Thirdly, if climate is seen as one element of locality, the form of a building may also connect or disconnect it to the site according to how well the building is prepared for the seasons.

If a natural site is individual the particular character or worth of one place makes it incomparable to other places and places it beyond quantifiable value[108]. To take this seriously is not to say that humans should never change a site, but it makes such changes slow and complicated far beyond the practices of present building. Given the pace of environmental deprivation today, that can only be an advantage. Further, to take environmental individuality seriously suggests that culture must be understood as cultivation, where all the elements of a given situation, as far as possible, are considered.

The vegetation of an area is, together with land forms, water and climate, among the most important characteristics of a particular environment. According to the above view, it should be treated along principles of continuity of place, with respect for the existing life of plants as a life form parallel to human life, not subordinated to it. If trees are cared for and flowers planted, why not allow weeds to bloom and mix the even greenery of lawns?[109] If the idea is to reconcile building and nature, even through marginal gestures, a rich - harmless - flora and fauna around and alongside the human habitat should be the goal.

I end my reflections with natural light: movement and mediator, energy and appearance of the universe seen as a living whole. Light is the foremost animating element, the source of energy which makes life and appearance possible. As vital energy and concrete appearance it epitomizes *natura naturans*, creative nature: it perceptibly touches the world and calls it to life, as its breath, pneuma or psyche, the more suggestive since it is immaterial and yet felt, tangibly, on our body. Light allows us to see, but it also warms our bodies and hurts our eyes: a life-enhancing element which stimulates the perceptive capacities of the human body, calling us into the world. As reflected by the snow on a bright day in March, after a long and dark winter, the sun may be painful, but it is an invigorating pain, a pain which suggests that although the tired body is lapsing behind life, life is generous, you might pick up on it. These experiences are somatic, but not exclusively so. Because of their cosmological and existential dimension - that we experience the world touching us and ourselves being touched, in a given position, in the continuity of the life we have - they differ from the therapeutic use of anti-depression lamps, solariums or charter trips to the sun, all of which represent a break, a non-continuity, an escape from the given.

Natural light is tangible, directional space. Its quality cannot be rendered in a picture, for the picture creates a standstill whereas natural light is always in motion, however subtly. This motion of light, in light, is paralleled by the movements of the perceiving body and of the perceptual apparatus. Being in a space is being able to move in it, to relocate one's body or one's attention, but also to be exposed and surrounded by the space, kept by it. Natural light - and artificial, when it is more than even, ambient light - gives directionality to space. In this it brings together space and the perceiving body, makes them parallel, makes them relate to the same centres of warmth and energy - the same pounding hearts and silent backdrops. The space is around us and has directions of its own, irrespective of us, but we appropriate it by adapting to its givens and thus find ourselves in a situation which is felt as ours. Awareness of the sources of light is an important part of our spatial competence; we choose positions relative to the light we need and to the light we want to be in.

In its changes, natural light is analogous to the experiencer as a living body, a process: also in this sense the experience of light, in space and on the world, is an unfolding which is parallel to the subject. The way a building receives light is traditionally one of the most valued qualities of architecture[110]. In interiors, access of natural light constitutes a contact with nature and with the world outside. The felt generosity of a room flooded with sunlight or the solace of dusk have their origins in the cosmos, in a universe that appears not as cold and neutral but as holding us. Seasons and diurnal rhythms are rhythms of life, of rest and vitality.

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Notes

[1] Frampton 1995, 27.

[2] Compare Welsch 1996, 288 (in English 1997, 146).

[3] Compare Benjamin 1997, 137-141.

[4] For examples, see Daniels 1993, 5-37, or von Bonsdorff 1994.

[5] This is how Claude Lefort describes the later phases of Merleau-Ponty's thinking; Lefort 1996, 7-8.

[6] Richard Sennett points out the weakness and illusory character of limitless freedom, as exemplified in Enlightenment thinking during the French revolution; Sennett 1996/1994, 282-316.

[7] Compare Foucault 1986/1969, 259-275.

[8] Compare Welsch 1996, 231-259 (in English 1997, 150-167).

[9] Compare Arendt 1958, 52-58.

[10] Compare Gregotti 1996.

[11] Bloch 1989/1988, 1-155; see also the comments in Levinas 1992/1986, 70. Similarly for Schiller, as David Simpson points out, the aesthetic state must "exist in the everyday world more as a utopian imperative than as an anticipated social development." Simpson 1988, 16.

[12] See Komar and Melamid 1992.

[13] See, for example, Todorov 1995 or Ricoeur 1984.

[14] What comes to mind as a possible example of this kind is "The Wall", Maya Lin's *Vietnam veterans Memorial* in Washington, D.C.

[15] Todorov 1995, 53.

[16] Compare the first section of chapter five.

[17] Here I overlook the intricate questions related to the practical application of these principles. For a discussion, see Kristeva 1989/1988, 139-152.

[18] Gregotti 1996, 11; compare Chemetov 1996, 85-104.

[19] Gregotti 1996, 27.

[20] Wong 1996, xxii; compare Gregotti 1996, 7-8.

[21] Compare, on the normal availability of a building for inspection and the ensuing perceptual changes in scope and size, Arnheim 1977, 131-133.

[22] Compare Sennett's discussion of the site of democracy in Perikles' Athens; Sennett 1996/1994, 31-67.

[23] Compare, for one example, Modris Eksteins' description of Berlin in August 1914; Eksteins 1990, 90-101.

[24] Compare chapter one, first section, and, on double presence, notes 89 and 90 below.

[25] Compare, on the ethical significance of the upright position, Kass 1994, 62-78 or Scruton 1980; also Bloch 1989/1988, 104.

[26] A fuller presentation is given in Speer, *Die neue Reichskanzlei*.

[27] Compare Sennett 1993/1977, 87-106.

[28] Such an aesthetic is opposed to the fascist modernism described by Andrew Hewitt, where functionality becomes an end in itself, so that finally the strategy against the ossification of values is the "burning of bones"; Hewitt 1993, 160 and 133-160. On the importance of resistance in urban space, see Sennett 1996/1994, 370-376.

[29] Compare Sennett on the disabling effects of pathos without the possibility to act; Sennett 1996/1994, 52-61. A similar one-sidedness is true of most totalitarian regimes and of the use of propaganda generally. *"Your country needs you!"* points to and nails the citizen to a defined position, thus depriving him of the freedom of movement.

[30] Sennett 1993/1977, 337-340.

[31] However, in distinction to Harries I do not make a normative distinction between motivated, integrated ornament and fanciful, idiosyncratic decoration, 1997, 28-68. When he pleads (68) for a turn to a "more encompassing reality" instead of a turn to a narrowly understood aesthetic, I agree in principle but doubt that the encompassing can be found anywhere but in the everyday. On ornament and detail, compare also Scruton 1980, 206-236.

[32] Compare sections one and two of chapter four.

[33] Compare Dufrenne, as noted earlier.

[34] Compare, on this notion of 'space', the first section in chapter four.

[35] Frank 1995, 116.

[36] On the value of anonymity and difference in urban environments, see Sennett 1993/1977, 47-122, and 1990, 121-149.

[37] Compare the second section of chapter five.

[38] Compare Lingis 1996, 1-3, 6.

[39] Compare Heidegger 1949/1927, 41-45, 175-180, 267-301 (par. 9, 38, 54-60) and Mulhall 1996, 130-136.

[40] Personality in its modern version is a fairly recent phenomenon; Sennett 1993/1977.

[41] On this function of ritual, see Sennett 1996/1994, 80-82. On the whole, the rituals of ancient Greece he discusses are much more defined and overarching in meaning than everyday politeness,

[42] Arendt 1958, 22-28; Levinas 1994/1961, 162-169.

[43] See, again, the works of Norberg-Schulz, Casey 1993, Harries 1997. Note also Sennett's warning: "[t]he more the myth of empty impersonality (...) becomes the common sense of a society, the more will that populace feel justified in destroying the essence of urbanity, which is that men can act together, without the compulsion to be the same"; Sennett 1993/1977, 255.

[44] See also chapter six, second section.

[45] As noted in chapter two, second section, fourth subsection.

[46] Compare Maldiney 1996, 22.

[47] Chemetov 1996, 67-69.

[48] This is how Sennett describes the medieval churches and the community around them; Sennett 1996/1994, 157.

[49] To say that they are ends does not seem any better; perhaps the distinction itself is not very useful here.

[50] Chemetov 1996, 59.

[51] Two examples: Alessi does this through increased design which detaches the object of use from the sphere of the everyday; Ikea through naming the objects while preserving and emphasizing their ordinary and familiar character.

[52] On self-represention in architecture; see chapter four, fourth section.

[53] Compare the World Trade Organization in New York, discussed in chapter six, first section.

[54] Some postmodern experiments seem to have confused the social dimension of life and the social function of buildings; for examples, see Jencks 1978.

[55] Gregotti 1996, 68-70, 71-72.

[56] Ehrenfeld 1993, 91.

[57] Odd Nerdrum, quoted in Pettersson 1988, 124.

[58] "Die Frage nach der Technik"; Heidegger 1954, 13-44.

[59] Rolston 1994, 8.

[60] Compare chapter two, first section, second subsection, on disinterestedness. This often holds for the experience of art also.

[61] Compare Dufrenne 1963; Howarth 1995; Hepburn 1993; Rolston 1986, 248-255.

[62] Hepburn 1993, 71.

[63] Animistic as suggestive of life, in an Aristotelian sense; see Durrant 1993 or Nussbaum and Oksenberg Rorty 1995/1992. This leaves the question of an interiority of organisms open.

[64] Sennett 1996/1994, 310.

[65] Note that Michel Serres speaks of the natural contract in a carefully metaphorical

way; Serres 1990.

[66] Deleuze 1989, 173.

[67] At least if one does not accept the idea that keeping oneself physically fit is a social obligation.

[68] Disinterested in a Levinasian sense.

[69] Compare chapter six, note 130.

[70] Arendt 1958, 8-9, 177-178, 247; compare Nye 1994, 134, 147, 151.

[71] Arendt 1958, 178.

[72] For example, Sennett's questioning of private personality does not imply that a human being is only public appearance, but that identity should be understood through what we are in relations to others, rather than through looking into our supposed hidden selves.

[73] Here the French is hard to translate, so I give as it stands: "*l'infini comme infinition de l'infini, comme gloire*", Levinas 1996/1978, 149; compare 220-239.

[74] Levinas 1994/1961, 324-325.

[75] Remember the story of the dog which alone treated the prisoners kindly during Levinas' time in a French Nazi camp; for a discussion of a dog as the other, Llewellyn 1991.

[76] Sallis 1994, ; compare also the first section of chapter five.

[77] Lingis 1996, 9.

[78] On ruins, see Simmel 1923, 135-143.

[79] Compare Harbison 1994/1991, 106.

[80] Rolston 1994, 9.

[81] Wollheim 1991, 185-186.

[82] It becomes, Rossi would say, a pathological element; Rossi 1989/1982, 59-60.

[83] Gregotti 1996, 87; compare chapter five, third section.

[84] Quinones points to these practices as devices through which Renaissance man could save himself for eternity in a time of rising secularization, Quinones 1972.

[85] Simone Weil's description of work in terms of obedience and humility is important, but remains on the general existential level of the relation between human being and reality. It therefore misses our individual responsibilities to a reality which is itself individual, particular and local; Weil 1990, 372-380. Alphonso Lingis' descriptions of the imperative incompetence, the imperative to "die into the world" and "become elemental" can also, while similarly important, be criticized for a certain one-sidedness; Lingis 1996, 49-50.

[86] Compare Serres' poignant description of hereness in an extreme situation; Serres 1991/1985, 15-16.

[87] Compare, on anonymity, chapter one, third section.

[88] Similar experiences are provided by art, particularly abstract, and by some built spaces.

[89] Josipovici 1996, 59 compare chapter one, fourth section.

[90] Josipovici 1996, 10, 14.

[91] McWhorter 1992a, 7.

[92] McWhorter 1992a, 9, compare 6: "It will take (...) tremendous courage and resolve to allow (...) thought of the occurring of things and their passage as events not ultimately under human control."

[93] For critical points on instrumental rationality in planning, see Relph 1986/1976, 81, 87-89.

[94] The first of these notions is used by Davis 1992, 77, the second by Norberg-Schulz 1980, 27-28.

[95] Davis 1992, 87.

[96] Davis 1992, 85.

[97] Such vitality is amply illustrated in J.G. Ballard's novel *Crash*; Ballard 1995/1973.

[98] An echo of Heidegger, as noted in chapter three, third section.

[99] Arendt 1958, 139.

[100] Compare chapter one, second section.

[101] This is also close to the American transcendentalism of Emerson and Thoreau; see Emerson 1981, Thoreau 1950.

[102] Hersey 1989.

[103] Sennett 1996/1994, 295. The project dates from 1793.

[104] Lingis 1996, 101. I do not want to collapse the difference between our human neighbour and a plant, or an object of inorganic nature, but it would be mistaken to set aside concern for otherness for use in the human context only.

[105] Note that Yi-Fu Tuan in his discussion of topophilia includes nature and culture, "environment" and "attitudes"; Tuan 1974.

[106] Sallis 1994, 114.

[107] Compare note 75 to chapter six.

[108] On value vs. worth, see the introduction to part three.

[109] What is a weed if not a plant that grows in an improper place, according to a human judge?

[110] Remember Le Corbusier's definition of architecture; Le Corbusier 1924. On shadows, see Sandrisser 1997, 29. Examples that come to mind are the churches of the Baroque, the Pantheon in Rome, or stone and timber walls.

Closing remarks

Throughout this work, I have taken seriously philosophical suggestions about human embodiment and situatedness and substantiated these through descriptions of environmental experiences in built and inhabited spaces of today. Aesthetics has been played out on various levels: in descriptions and reflections on experience; in analyses of the elements of environments; in observations on design, and in the overall stance of this study. In these final paragraphs I shall only add a few remarks in the spirit of a mild utopianism.

If building truly is a symptom of culture, the state of Western civilization does not look very promising, despite the fact that it might have been a very good idea[1]. In too many places, building has lost touch with the natural ground, with topography and climate as well as with social reality. This gives rise to strategies of defence: climate is held at bay by isolation and airconditioning, and the poor by a buzz of media and entertainment. One finds examples of nature-friendly, socially responsible and aesthetically pleasing design, but in the environment as a whole these are not the rule. Further, while the environment is basically shared, environments today are often claimed by certain functions while excluding others.

The problems of building, design and planning are all-encompassing and cannot be solved through aesthetic reflection. Yet one should remember that in the ending twentieth century there is more information than ever, and still human need and violence and the extinction of other species increase with unprecedented speed. For the reflective individual, knowledge brings pain. In this situation, to reject aesthetics as a too narrow perspective is to repeat a figure of thought that maintains our problems and affirms the distortion of human experience.

Left to enjoy the world in peace, would each human being be more one-eyed or myopic than in today's world of pressure? Does the acceptance of existing conditions represent a more naive and less sophisticated response to the complexities of life than wish-fulfilling manipulation? Examples of cultures that are not marked by the ideal of conquest and efficiency suggest otherwise. It is here that the aesthetic mode of experiencing - as part of everyday life or as moments we remember - comes in. Simply enjoying the same modest houses with their gentle colours as yesterday contributes a wonder which is both respectful and engaged. One is less confined in oneself and more present to what is around.

To be touched by the world may change not only our perceptions, but also ourselves. There may always be an ethical kernel in this kind of aesthetic experience, the weight of conscience, an awareness of limits. But that kernel is not self-sufficient; it is part of a fruit, of a flesh which has grown into what it is and will rot, if let to itself, but may nourish us.

There is today an evident need for the reappropriation of public space by living bodies. In our situation, the refusal to accept the megalomania of technological progress and utopia is radical. To be conservative is, then, not to look back so much as to look around, to pause and reflect. The emphasis on space and lingering in this work is best understood in that context, against the violence of contemporary land use strategies towards natural and human communities and the insensitive and shortsighted emphasis on efficiency or productivity in dominant discourses.

Mild utopianism is about simple things, but it becomes difficult in a time of programmatic oblivion. It is about decent houses, about ruins and sprouts, about bars and streets, about people who speak when spoken to despite being taught to distrust the stranger.

Notes

[1] This is said to have been Mahatma Gandhis's answer when he was asked for his opinion of Western civilization. See also Lingis 1997.

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