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Table of Contents

MAR Volume 4, 2017

*Nature Created?
Or, the Gentle Touch of Artificial Snow*
Henriette Steiner *page 5*

*Seaward:
The Sound of Eros and an Athenian Avenue
to the Aegean*
Phoebe Giannisi (trans. Konstantinos Matsoukas) *page 21*

*Acts of Symbiosis:
A Literary Analysis of the Work of
Rogelio Salmona and Alvar Aalto*
Klaske Havik *page 41*

*Presenting the Extremely Difficult Past:
Günther Domenig's Documentation Center
of the National Socialist Party Rally
Grounds, Nuremberg, Germany*
Rumiko Handa *page 63*

Nature Created? Or, the Gentle Touch of Artificial Snow

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Abstract

This article discusses, on the one hand, a holiday photograph of a ski hill in southern Sweden and, on the other hand, a fictional story set in a similar southern Swedish landscape, the children's book entitled *Den Fräcka Kråkan* from 1985 by Ulf Nilsson and Eva Eriksson. I use this discussion to broach wider questions concerning modes of appreciating what has traditionally been termed "nature" in light of the current condition of what is often called the Anthropocene. I include an example of how this concept has migrated into landscape architecture theory in the work of the German landscape architect Martin Prominski, thereby raising concerns about the historicism this concept entails and discussing the consequences thereof.

February 2017. It was the week of the school winter holidays in Denmark, and we had crossed the Øresund Bridge from Denmark to Sweden to go skiing for the day. I had a great time. It was a day of clear skies and beautiful sunshine, perfect snow and an absolutely gorgeous panorama. Skis on my feet, I was swooshing down the hillside accompanied by my six-year-old son, who was just beginning to get the hang of downhill

skiing. At one point we were standing atop the highest slope, about to embark on the ride downwards. I had stopped for a moment to catch my breath and enjoy the view. As I looked into the distance, a glaring contrast became evident between the soft sensation of the fluffy white snow on the hill and the flat, snowless landscape stretching out at the foot of the hill. Perhaps reinforced by the elevated point of view, this evident contrast in the landscape caught my attention. I paused. A series of questions began to take shape concerning the kind of nature the scenery represented and the form of entry we might have into discussing or indeed experiencing 'it', insofar as we can even talk about nature as a concept in this way. My son's energetic yell from behind me – "Come on, let's go!" – propelled my attention back to the activity in which we were immersed. However, before continuing down the hill, I quickly reached for the mobile phone in my pocket and took a picture of the scenery, as a minimal form of reflection on what I had seen.

In this article I return to my snapshot of the panorama of that southern Swedish skiing landscape. I consider the image and its context, reading the photograph as a cultural product rather than as pure documentation. I use the discussion to initiate wider questions concerning modes of appreciating 'nature' in light of the current condition of what is often called the Anthropocene. I acknowledge the descriptive evocativeness of this concept, the very existence of which is arguably indicative of a sea change in the way nature is considered in contemporary Western culture in the light of the pressing ecological concerns of climate change. However, I also reflect on the historicism this concept implies. To illustrate some of the consequences of this, I turn to discussions within landscape architecture, exemplified by the German landscape architect Martin Prominski, who calls for landscape architects to replace binary notions of nature versus culture with what he calls the "andscape". By proposing to replace dualistic notions with the symmetry of interdependencies given in the 'and' of the neologism 'andscape', Prominski arguably comes to ascribe problematic redemptive qualities to this word. I end by discussing another image of the southern Swedish countryside, one found in a story entitled *Den Fräcka Kråkan* (the naughty crow), a Swedish children's book from the mid-1980s.¹ This story illuminates the dependencies involved in our relationship with what, by means of allegory and allusion, is foregrounded as characterizing "nature" in this book. This suggests a different entryway into discussion regarding the relationships between the human and the non-human, grounded in direct involvement and ethical concerns.

The fact that I draw on vernacular materials – a holiday photograph and a children's book – as the primary vehicles for discussion in this article mirrors a methodological question. This question runs throughout this contribution, although it must also be emphasized that it evades a definitive answer: how to make visible and address the dependencies of human culture on the natural world that become evident in this situated material, without on the one hand turning them into a projection screen for something else, or on the other hand losing sight of their more general relevance?

The Gentle Touch of Artificial Snow

In the photograph (Figure 1), which I took on the top of the hill during my recent Swedish skiing adventure, the entire foreground – and more than half the image – shows a perfect white plane of soft, packed snow. The snow dominates the picture as a white sameness, except for the visible traces of people who have previously skied here. Further into the distance a line of people are clearly distinguishable who, like me, are looking out over a flat, snowless landscape. One thing that springs to mind is that the scenery they are looking at does not offer an alpine experience. There are no mountains in sight, but quite the opposite: the unfolding panorama is composed of the dark green and light brown hues of conifers and wintering fields.

The photo was taken in Vallåsen, probably Scandinavia's southernmost self-proclaimed ski resort. As such resorts go it is very unassuming, comprising a car park, a couple of small wooden shops where you can rent or buy skis and other sports gear, and a café, as well as a couple of ski lifts and a few fairly flat slopes down a single hill. Despite its modest size, Vallåsen is a popular destination, and my experience that day certainly had a mass-touristy feel, not least in the long queues outside the rental shop and at the entrances to the ski lifts. This touristy feel was emphasized by the fact that its proximity to the most populous part of Denmark, the area around Copenhagen, makes Vallåsen highly popular with Danish visitors.

So here I was, in Sweden, surrounded by hundreds of other middle-class Copenhageners who had also escaped the city for an outdoor skiing experience on this sunny holiday. The atmosphere was friendly and chatty, and many people were making jokes about the invasion of tourist Danes into Sweden. One of the few Swedes I did meet – an older polylingual gentleman from Helsingborg, one of the bigger cities close by – called Vallåsen the “Danish Alps”. For people from a flat country such as Denmark, Vallåsen, with its gentle slopes that are perfect for beginners certainly seemed to ‘do the job’ for a day’s outing in the snow, he seemed to imply. That Swedes prefer to go elsewhere – to do proper skiing, as it were – certainly seemed to be supported by anecdotal evidence that day, although the overwhelming presence of Danish families might of course have been contingent on the winter holidays falling on different dates in Danish and Swedish schools. Nonetheless, the gentleman’s statement pertained to the breadth and orientation of our interpretive horizon, and the kind of landscape necessary to experience “proper” downhill skiing may not be the same for everyone. One may thus say that behind the slightly condescending tone of this statement also lay a sense of generosity, something like: “Well, if this really is enough of a nature experience for the Danes, let them have it!” Indeed, as an experience it all felt very safe, a little like going sleighing in a city park. A hill just high and steep enough to get that swooshing sensation. A very urban experience, we might say, one of mingling with the crowd and conforming to the rules and expectations precisely orchestrated by the infrastructure of the ski resort.

This reflection obviously is a trivial one inasmuch as downhill skiing, not least in this area, is heavily dependent on human planning and heavy machinery – just like building a city. As can be gathered from the photograph, a large number of trees have been cut down to establish the slopes and the lifts that take

people up the hill. Of course, given that this is a sparsely populated area dominated by a mix of agriculture, forestry and leisure activities, almost everyone here must have been reliant on cars or buses to bring them to the site. It is not much of a wilderness experience, and we are far from any Romantic notions about revealing nature's sublime forces. Nonetheless, on the larger continuum of Western winter sports – ranging from very “urban” forms such as sleighing in the park to “wilder” forms such as heli-skiing or mountaineering – no sport seems any less steeped than any other in cultural notions and naive narratives about escaping the confines of human culture. This certainly applies to the activities reflected in the photograph. Despite the low-key setting of the skiing resort, we thus begin to enter the complex territory of the ways nature-culture dualisms continue to mark Western culture, as well as emerging questions about possible ways of dismantling them.

In terms of the history and geology of the site, Vallåsen was established in the late 1980s after a series of very cold winters in the region, one effect of which was the establishment of a ski hill on the so-called Esker of Halland, “Hallandsåsen”. Hallandsåsen is the name used for the hill formation that stretches across the southern part of the Swedish province of Halland and the northern part of the province of Skåne. However, it is not a real esker: an esker (ås) is an elevated soil formation created at the end of the Ice Age by gravel sedimenting in streams beneath the ice. Hallandsåsen is really a horst, a small ridge, so the proper name for this geological formation would probably be something like “the Horst of Halland/Skåne”. It is the relative steepness of the northern part of the ridge which makes the ski hill possible. Equally confusing, however, is the prefix Vall in Vallåsen. It could mean something like a rampart or wall in Swedish, but in the context of the skiing resort it may also be said to allude to famous French skiing resorts such as Val Thorens, where Val means valley. Thus in Vallåsen there is no wall, valley or esker in sight, and calling the site a “skiing resort” seems a bit of an overstatement. This in-built optimism (or perhaps simply successful branding) obviously does not impact on the skiing experience as such, and the numerous visitors who come for a day or two's skiing conveniently close to both Copenhagen and the southern cities of Sweden seem not to mind these discrepancies. They seem quite content with the mere existence of a hill just steep and long enough to provide a 1,260-metre ride down a snow-covered ski slope.

With the trend towards warmer winters and diminished snowfall since Vallåsen's establishment in the 1980s, the ski resort has been open for business in the winter season for periods ranging between just 11 days (2007–2008) and 100 days (2010–2011) during its nearly 30-year history.² However, despite the tendency towards warmer winters, there seems to be no general downward curve in the number of days the resort is open each year. The solution to the problem of less snowfall is evident in this picture, and is a quite technological one: the snow cannon. This is why you can even see a thick blanket of snow in the foreground of the picture, on the slope, against the background of brown trees and snowless fields. Artificial snow is certainly snowy enough to be perfect for skiing; it is not as if my skis care whether the snow fell “naturally” or was produced by a machine. As soon as the temperature drops below zero degrees Celsius, water – of which there is plenty in the region – is pumped into the snow cannons and the hill is

covered in thick, perfect snow. Paradoxically, we must assume that my choice to go to the so-called Danish Alps in Vallåsen by car and to ride down a hill covered in artificial snow was more ecologically sound, all things considered, than if I had flown with the family to the French Alps to go skiing. Having said that, however, and although there is much to be said for the 1970s phrase “think globally, act locally”, pitching the problem of climate change as a moral dilemma about whether it is “better” to drive to Vallåsen or fly to Val Thorens arguably misses the point of the discussion about what to make of the dwindling snowfall in Vallåsen in the light of climate change.

What discussing this image does tell us, however, is the way it gives rise to potentially conflicting interpretations concerning not just the temporality of the looming effects of climate change, but also Western culture’s unwavering optimism about the possibility of finding technological solutions to what may be bracketed as technological problems. Here, of course, it is also quite evident that even in light of what may seem quite a concrete problem at the local level – that is, the decrease in snowfall – simply inventing better snow cannons is hardly an adequate response to the larger-scale problems that afflict this area and are felt by those who want to go skiing at Vallåsen. Unlike the infamous indoor ski slope erected in the flat, hot desert setting of Dubai,³ it is clear that Vallåsen depends on the weather – on temperature, if not snowfall – to produce the necessary conditions for a skiing experience. This acknowledges a series of dependencies in terms of both climate and the geology of the sloping hill.

With global warming, the businesses at Vallåsen may of course face further difficulties, as a temperature drop below zero degrees Celsius is necessary for the snow cannons to work. One wonders whether there is a large enough customer base to make it a sensible investment to cover the hill to change it into a Dubai-style climate-controlled interior and cool it artificially sometime in the future. Even if we were to choose to ignore the paradoxes raised by this discussion and simply hope for colder weather, the highly culturally manipulated experience which Vallåsen has to offer is already indicative that our entry point into even discussing the term ‘nature’ is inherently cultural in character. More interesting, therefore, is the way the discussion illuminates the contours of a situation where the local and the large scale are so intrinsically interwoven that it is hard to distinguish the one from the other in any meaningful way. This points to current discussions which variously go under headings such as the Anthropocene, to which I now turn.

Nature Created?

In current scholarship, the term Anthropocene is often used to describe the current situation, where it has become clear that activities of human culture have begun to influence what used to be termed nature on a very large scale and in highly complex ways. Landscape architect Martin Prominski defines the concept as follows:

The effects of human activity have reached every square metre of the earth and beyond – for example through carbon or nitrogen emissions – thus we should acknowledge this total human influence by changing the name of our geological epoch from Holocene to Anthropocene. Yet, this acknowledgement has consequences for society in general and for landscape architecture in particular, because the Western concept of ‘Nature’ as something independent of human influence is shattered.⁴

Since its proposal in 2002 by geologist and Nobel prize winner Paul Crutzen, the concept of the Anthropocene has received interest both inside and beyond the natural science community as a way of conceptualizing humans’ increased impact on the global environment.⁵ But, notably, this is not always interpreted only in negative terms, and as Crutzen concludes in his article, the Anthropocene “will require appropriate human behaviour at all scales, and may well involve internationally accepted, large-scale geo-engineering projects, for instance to “optimize” climate.”⁶ The Anthropocene is a powerful description of a situation where we may say that the influence of human culture has reached deeply into the ecosystems of planet Earth, even into the deepest sediments and far out into the atmosphere. Climate change thus is a primary large-scale phenomenon displaying local effects. It is significant that its impact is beginning to show itself in complicated and uncontrollable effects on the ecosystem, and thus also in what may be regarded as the predicament of human culture. This indicates the difficulties in even thinking “nature” to be separate from “culture”, and calls for descriptions of their extreme entanglement in terms of their mutual effects.⁷ However, the term Anthropocene, as it originates in Crutzen’s *Nature* article, has also been criticized in different ways – for example, as representing an anthropocentric attitude, or for associating with the entire human species phenomena that actually originate within a particular Western economic context and should thus be seen in the light of very particular power structures.⁸ In itself, however, the idea of a movement from one age (the Holocene) to another (the Anthropocene) where even geological structures are influenced by a single species (humans) draws on a historicist attitude. It portrays history’s progression as a series of successive ages, and involves an idea of human prowess, invention and ingenuity, thereby even implying that such progress can overcome the Anthropocene predicament itself, as seen in the concluding quotation from the article. This way of thinking is, of course, a tradition in its own right.⁹ To some extent we have here the problem of a “new” term relating to an ‘old’ set of relations and a redemptive belief that technological development will “solve” the crisis as the relevant way forward. Nonetheless, the term does reflect the global or even planetary scale of the problem, which challenge may be said to call for corresponding “planetary” imagery.¹⁰

For Prominski, discussing the Anthropocene as a condition poses new challenges for the work and self-understanding of the landscape architect, who traditionally manipulates “nature” in the form of soil and plants with the purpose of making meaningful spaces for people. This new condition leads Prominski to propose replacing the concept of “landscape” with that of “andscape”, a term connoting the fact that the

categories of nature and culture are now so entangled that they have become completely fused. He draws this concept from the Russian painter and art theorist Wassily Kandinsky (1866–1944), who in 1927 proposed the word “andscape” as a way to encourage the dissolution of dichotomies. In the andscape, human culture and nature are on a par, a symmetrical relationship represented in the “and”. While it should be evident that something is going on in the photograph discussed above that makes it hard to uphold the binary categories of nature and culture, I do wonder whether the radical sameness implied by the word “andscape” (and similar concepts in some accounts of the Anthropocene, such as post-nature, etc.¹¹) is helpful for a full understanding of the changed conditions of the interpretation of “nature” that this photograph indicates. Rather than questioning the degree to which we create nature or vice versa, or elevating the relationship into a radical sameness, we should be enquiring into the quality of this interdependence. Let us therefore attempt to reframe the question in order to begin this discussion and turn to a different representation of the southern Swedish landscape.

In Figure 2 we can see an image from the Swedish children’s book *The Naughty Crow*.¹² It is a story about two children on a farm in Skåne who turn to a variety of measures to chase a crow away from a cherry tree, where it is eating cherries to which the children feel entitled. The book is illustrated with pencil drawings that look a little like soft water colours and are thus unlikely to be a precise depiction of a particular farm in rural Skåne. Rather, what we have here is a picture of a typical farm in the flat region of this part of Sweden close to the sea.

In the story, as implied by the book’s cover image (Figure 3), a crow invades the peaceful setting of the farm and refuses to be “put in its place” by the children. The crow may be seen as an allegory of wild “nature” in this domesticated setting insofar as it is perhaps the wildest beast the children are likely to meet in this part of the world. The little boy in the picture gets a visit from his cousin, the slightly older Cilla Axelsson. Cilla is best described as a tough cookie. She is furious that the crow is eating the cherries, and she does not shy away from using all sorts of methods to scare it off. This includes chasing the crow with the garden hose, trying to scare it away by blowing a trumpet, dressing up like an even wilder beast and becoming a living scarecrow. Finally, the children capture the bird with a net.

While the children manage to disturb numerous other animals on the farm, the crow is depicted as a disturbance from the outside, one they cannot influence or get rid of. At the same time, however, the crow is humanized. Its behaviour is described as ‘naughty’ – for example, in the way the children perceive its mannerisms, as if it were bowing naughtily before them or grinning when it squawked. Of course, we may see this as a projection of the children’s own forms of behaviour, perhaps even as a self-mirroring: the word “naughty” is usually applied to children. When they finally manage to catch the crow with the net, it grows silent and lethargic. The children fear that they have killed it and they begin to mourn, only now realizing what they have done. Luckily, at that very moment, it is as if the crow is brought back to life, and it flies off, squawking more loudly than ever. The children experience great relief and begin to accept the

presence of the crow. The moral of the story presents the children's learning from experience and their acceptance of the crow's presence as a call for cohabitation between plants, animals and humans, each on their own terms. The last page of the book reads:

That summer, the cherry tree ripened in the courtyard between the henhouse, the shed and the barn. In the mornings, my cousin Cilla Axelsson and I ventured into the soft shade of the tree and feasted on our cherries. Later, the naughty crow came and tore at its own berries. Crows don't ask for anyone's permission. They do as they please. Since this happened, I now know that no one can own a tree and keep it to themselves. And that you can't change a crow. No one can change a naughty crow.¹³ (Figure 4)

We may talk about overcoming the duality of nature and culture by describing it, like Bruno Latour, as a form of entanglement; we may discuss the Anthropocene as a screen for new projections, as did Martin Prominski. But I would caution against too radical a lack of ontological differentiation. If nothing else, one may argue that "nature" cares little whether human culture exists or not. However, the means we have at our disposal to begin to understand this condition – as I have attempted with the "vernacular" material here – may allow for a interpretation of this situation in a process of self-reflection. In this way we too, like the children in the story, might begin to outline an ethical investment in our concrete interactions with and dependencies on "nature", hopefully before it is too late. Not to force anthropocentrism upon it, nor to completely possess it, but to engage in peaceful pruning and a sensuous enjoyment of the crops and experiences it offers – whether cherry-picking or skiing.

The Clear Skies of the Anthropocene

Let me sum up. I started out by considering a picture of an artificial clearing in a forest. It is connected to the local road network, complete with commercial institutions for renting or buying "gear" and food, toilet facilities, etc., and supported with an infrastructure of excellent plumbing, ski lifts and even snow! Not much wilderness here, one might say. If anything, on my outing in the Swedish landscape I was part of a deeply cultural experience. But at the same time, discussing this photograph began to expose the limits of Western culture's narrative of the mastery of human culture over nature. Drawing on the story *The Naughty Crow*, I began to outline more concretely the dependencies between human culture and nature, which, when freed from its abstract conceptualization as "nature" may be said simply to be very silently present – the ground that quite literally carries us. Nature, in this sense, is perhaps what French phenomenologist Maurice Merleau-Ponty's later writings called a natural ground underlying a human world of habits and culture.¹⁴

The interpretation I made of the trend of warming winters in Skåne, which suggests that climate change might impede the running of the ski resort Vallåsen in the future, is of course not backed up by facts. Yet, although I took the photograph spontaneously and without giving much consideration to the technical details, like the other people who broke off their activity to line up and admire the view, it is a reminder that we have been taught to “see” nature in a very particular way, a way that is reminiscent of Romantic notions of wilderness, grandeur, etc. At Vallåsen it is probably impossible to choose a grander perspective than the one I unconsciously chose when taking the picture. Paradoxically, perhaps, while it became a means to discuss aspects of this tradition, it also was precisely this inherited constructed view that enabled me to voice the questions discussed here. While the interpretation of products of visual culture – even mundane and trivial products such as a photograph and a children’s book – can begin to unlock deeper issues, it also suggests a range of methodological questions to which it is impossible to give clear answers. The particularity of the material depends on interpretation to be understood, and it risks being entrapped by the very dependencies the interpretation wishes to make visible.

Acknowledging this, in my discussion I have used Prominski’s endeavour as a (problematic) example of a current orientation in different areas of scholarship within the humanities and social sciences towards the material, towards objects, things, and the built and natural environments. This orientation should be seen as contrasting with the important role that representations previously played in these fields, as well as with the modern Cartesian tradition of thinking that separates categories such as mind and matter, human and non-human, etc.¹⁵ It includes such theoretical formations as actor-network theory and what goes under the heading of new materialism. As archaeologist Ian Hodder writes, “in these different approaches it is accepted that human existence and social life depend on material things and are entangled with them; humans and things are relationally produced.”¹⁶ Yet as Hodder also argues, many of these approaches, by calling on metaphors such as networks, assemblages, mesh, etc., often imply a symmetry of relationships. Instead, he suggests that “our relations with things are often asymmetrical, leading to entrapments in particular pathways from which it is difficult to escape.”¹⁷ This article has set out to give examples of the meaning of this entrapment in concrete situations, and in relation to questions about how to approach nature in light of the increasing discountenance of inherited binaries such as nature versus culture and the Anthropocene.

Images



Figure 1. View from Vallåsen ski resort. (Photo by author)

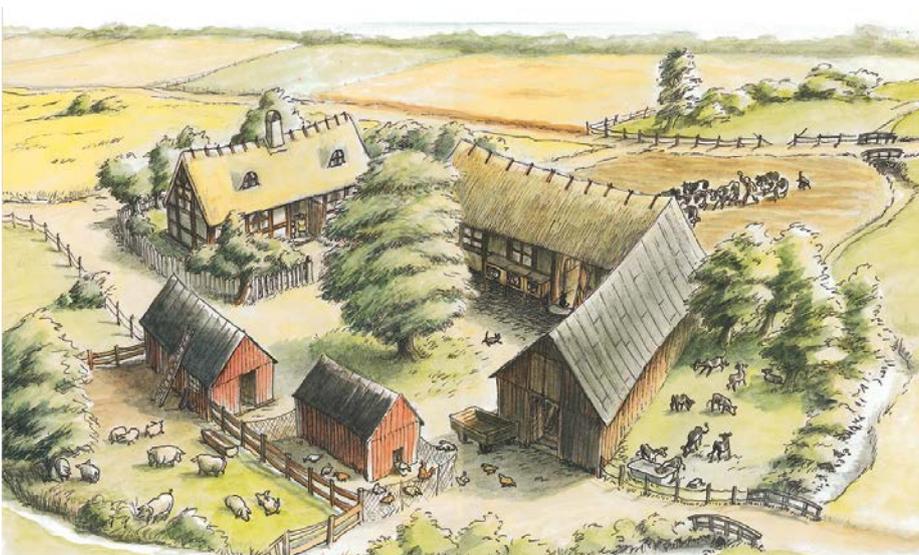


Figure 2. *The Naughty Crow*, pp. 2–3. (Courtesy of Bonnier Books)

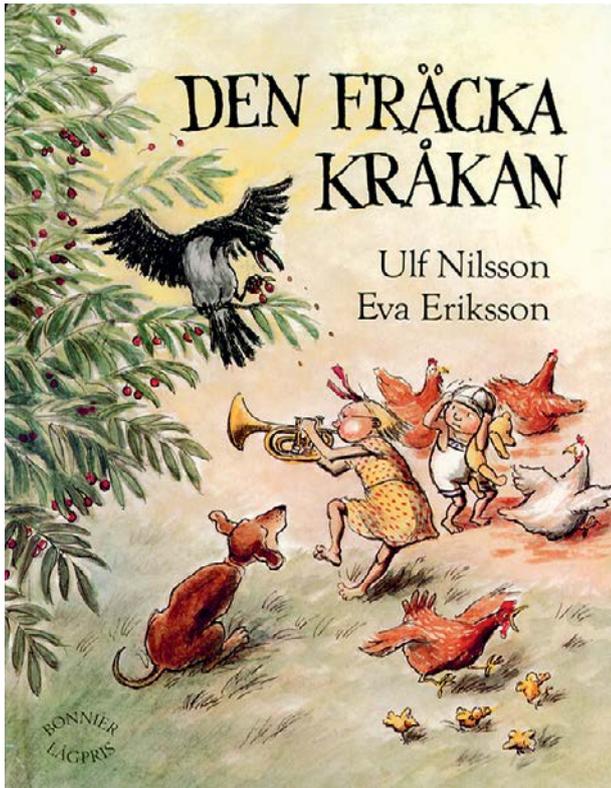


Figure 3. *The Naughty Crow*, cover image. (Courtesy of Bonnier Books)

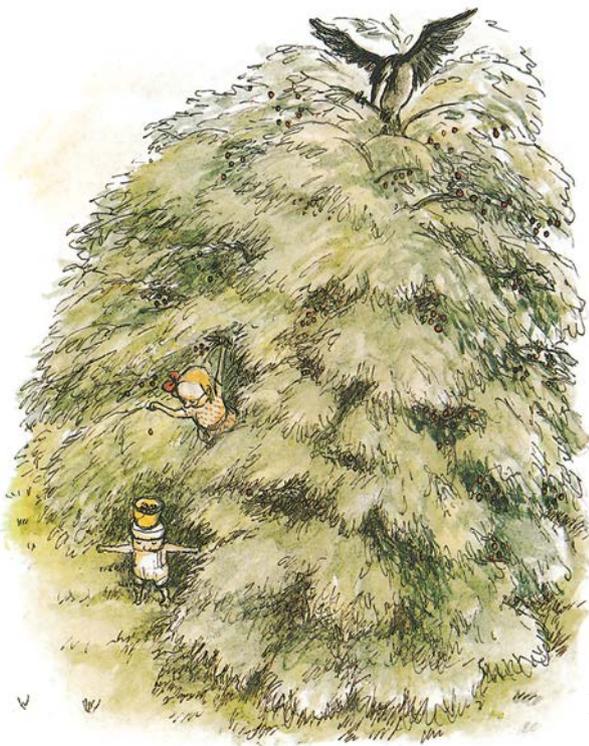


Figure 4. *The Naughty Crow*, p. 30. (Courtesy of Bonnier Books)

Notes

- 1 Ulf Nilsson and Eva Eriksson. *Den Fräcka Kråkan*. Stockholm: Bonniers Junior Förlag AB, 1985.
- 2 See <http://vallasen.se/om-vallasen/vallasen/#vinterhistorik>, accessed 20 August 2017.
- 3 See Ski Dubai, <https://www.theplaymania.com/skidubai>, accessed 20 August 2017.
- 4 Martin Prominski. "Acknowledging the Anthropocene". In *On the Move: Landscape Architecture Europe #4*, ed. by Lisa Diedrich et al. (Blauwdruk: Wageningen, 2015), pp. 173–177, p. 173.
- 5 Paul Crutzen. "Geology of Mankind." In *Nature* (415, 2002), p. 23.
- 6 Crutzen, "Geology", p. 23.
- 7 A prominent framework within the humanities and social sciences for understanding these entanglements is offered in actor-network theory. The French philosopher Bruno Latour has played a particular role in establishing this way of thinking, see e.g. Bruno Latour. *Reassembling the Social. An Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.
- 8 See discussion in e.g. Andreas Malm and Alf Hornborg's "The Geology of Mankind? A Critique of the Anthropocene Narrative." in *Anthropocene Review* (1:1), pp. 62–69.
- 9 In relation to architecture, see e.g. Dalibor Vesely. *Architecture in the Age of Divided Representation: The Question of Creativity in the Shadow of Production*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2004.
- 10 James Graham et al. eds. *Climates: Architecture and the Planetary Imaginary*. Bern and New York: The Avery Review and Lars Müller Publishing.
- 11 Other examples of such concepts, despite their differences and degrees of evocative effect, include Timothy Morton's notion of the "hyperobject", Donna Haraway's suggestion of the Chthulucene, and Jane Bennett's "vibrant matter". Timothy Morton. *Hyperobjects: Philosophy and Ecology after the End of the World*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013. Donna Haraway. *Staying with the Trouble: Making Kind in the Chthulucene*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2016. Jane Bennett. *Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things*. Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2010.
- 12 Ulf Nilsson and Eva Eriksson. *Den Fräcka Kråkan*.
- 13 Ulf Nilsson and Eva Eriksson. *Den Fräcka Kråkan*, p. 30. *Own translation*.
- 14 See the discussion of Maurice Merleau-Ponty's *The Visible and the Invisible* in Henriette Steiner. "The Earth Does Not Move and the Ground of the City: Towards a Phenomenology of the City." In *Journal of Comparative Cultural Studies in Architecture* (6, 2012), pp. 46–55.

- 15 Ian Hodder. "The Entanglements of Humans and Things: A Long-Term View". In *New Literary History* (45:1, 2014), pp. 19–36.
- 16 Hodder, "Entanglements", p. 19.
- 17 Hodder, "Entanglements", p. 19.

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*Seaward:
The Sound of Eros and an Athenian Avenue
to the Aegean*

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Translated by Konstantinos Matsoukas

Abstract

The present paper deals with the imaginary relation of ancient and modern Athens with the sea. Using the material trace on the urban space, the road axis from the center towards the seafront, the paper focuses on the human body of the resident, and more specifically, its connection to the desire, to the pleasure and catharsis, which sea water symbolically entails. *Seawards* is no more than the construction of a brief, anthropological soundscape for this desire, using the sound of the music created to accompany the imaginary descent to the sea. As a method it ties together myths, poetry and popular music to create a polyphonic paradigm replete with emotions and atmospheres.

The paper is structured through different episodes related to the history of the city's connection to the sea. The ancient episodes include first the mythic battle of Athena and Poseidon and its traces on Athenian acropolis, the ancient ritual of the Eleusinean mysteries *ἀλαδεμύσται* ("Seaward, initiates"), where crowds of people were descending from Athens to the sea in order to be washed and purified, and Plato's preamble to the *Symposion*. The modern episodes take the way of Syngrou Avenue, the wide and straight

thoroughfare connecting Athens with Phaleron, completed in the 1930's. Heeding the call to write on erotic desire as following an Avenue towards the sea, George Seferis has left three poems related to Syngrou: *Syngrou Avenue* (1930), *Syngrou Avenue II* (1935), and *A Word about Summer* (1936). The poetic discourse of Seferis about the Syngrou Avenue overshadows the contemporary discourse of the margin, the songs by *rembetes*, which relish the sea physically without any ethical dilemma.

A kind of controversy is valid for all the episodes: a strong longing desire and a mourning are detected. The sea functions as a collective unconscious that encompasses the desire for the impossible.

Preamble

First step: geography.

Starting the account of his travel through Greece, Pausanias enters Attica:

“From the mainland of Greece extending in the direction of the Cycladic islands and the Aegean Sea, Attica’s cape Sounion.”

Pausanias approaches Athens by sea. The cape of Sounion protruding into the Aegean Sea is the first sign of the mainland. As he continues his approach, Pausanias tells us that the initial seaport of Athens was Phaleron, the point of Theseus’ departure for Crete, since the sea there is right next to the city.

Second step: the imaginary relation of ancient Athens with the sea, which is symbolized in the duel of the two gods, Athena and Poseidon. During the duel, Poseidon embeds the phallic trident into the body of the earth of Athens, and water springs up.

On the hill of the Acropolis, the markings (“testimonials”) of this bid by the eventually defeated Poseidon are described by Pausanias as imprinted inside the temple of the Erechtheion¹:

Inside it there are altars, one of them Poseidon’s... As the building has a dual aspect, there is in it also a well with seawater... It is noteworthy that from inside the well, the sound of waves can be heard when there is a south wind blowing. There is, too, the mark of a trident on the rock.

Pausanias XXVI.5

On the summit of the Acropolis, the sea again appears: not merely as it can be viewed in the skyline of Athens, but also as its very heart, since at the top of the well there rises upwards from the depths, i.e. towards the visitor, the sound of sea waves when there’s a southern wind, i.e., a wind from the direction of Phaleron.

Nevertheless, the Poseidonian markings are the memory of a defeat, the defeat of the sea (Poseidon) in favor of the land (olive tree, Athena). Despite that, the mythical contestation remains palpable even to the present time, since the sea is always there. The dilemma of that inaugural duel will haunt forevermore the relation of the city of Athens to the sea.

The connection of Athens with the sea in antiquity has been materialized by the creation of the port of Piraeus, which symbolizes the military, political and economical relation of ancient Athens to the sea element. Nevertheless, in the present context, I am primarily interested in the counterpoint of this sovereignty: instead of the material trace on the urban space, let's focus on the human body of the resident, and more specifically, its connection to the desire. I hasten to specify that I mean the desire to open up to the pleasure and catharsis which sea water symbolically entails.

In antiquity, this opening up was expressed in the ritual of the Eleusinean mysteries *ἀλαδεμύσται* ("Seaward, initiates"), the call for the initiates to advance in a procession to offer sacrifice and ritually bathe in seawater.

This ritual preceded the basic part of the Eleusinean Mysteries, and it was also the name of the special day upon which it was held, i.e., the second day of the Eleusinian mysteries, in the 16th Boedromion month, which last we can roughly interpret as September. The name of the day was already a command, as if there were already a strong urge inside the bodies of the Athenians to visit the seashore of Athens, even if they were residing in the interior of the Attica basin. Crowds of people were then descending from Athens to the sea in order to be washed and purified by seawater. People were carried by wagons, and there were caretakers (*epimelitai*) set by the city of Athens in order to supervise and put in order the chaotic descent of crowds to the sea. According to Mylonas we can imagine the procession as having had a cheerful and noisy atmosphere. The name of the procession appears in the inscriptions as "*ALADE ἔλα^σις*": *ἐλα^σις*, a word meaning, according Liddell-Scott Dictionary, "driving away", or "march, expedition", which is derived from the verb *ἐλαύνω*, meaning "drive, set in motion, of driving flocks" a verb stemming from the Indo-European root **el-*, "to move, to go", common with *ἐλευσις*, *εως*, *ἦ*, "coming, arrival", that is related to Eleusis. The movement is towards the sea, "seawards", *ἀλα^δε*, "to or into the sea", and we can note here that from the same verb we have derivatives such as "elastikos", "elastic, resilient".

The archaeologists suggest that the initiates went swimming in the sea holding piglets, (animals used in several rituals of the goddess Demeter), which were carried with them back to Athens in order to be sacrificed and to purify the initiates with their blood. If we believe Plutarch, the sea bath of the mysteries took place in the present port of Piraeus, at the port of Kantharos, and that is why the procession passed between the Long Walls. Plutarch also informs us about the following incident and gives its explanation:

Moreover, as a mystic initiate was washing a pig in the harbour of Cantharus, a great fish seized the man and devoured the lower parts of his body (*τὰ κάτω μέρη τοῦ σώματος ἄχρι τῆς κοιλίας κατέπιε*) as far as the belly,

by which Heaven clearly indicated to them in advance that they would be deprived of the lower parts of the city which adjoined the sea, but would retain the upper city. ὅτι τῶν κάτω καὶ πρὸς θαλάσση στερηθέντες τὴν ἄνω πόλιν διαφυλάξουσιν.

Plut. Phoc. 28.3, translated by Bernadotte Perrin

The incident, an attack of a great fish on a human body, was seen as an omen, with the city of Athens along with Piraeus being understood as a body with an upper and a lower part. The lower part is lower because of its altitude, i.e., on the sea, but also lower because of having been considered inferior in terms of hierarchy, and thus was to be sacrificed for the benefit of the upper part.

If we accept Travlos' assumptions as valid, the descent of the initiates would be carried out on a stretch between Athens and the coast, between the Long Walls of Athens or even between the Long Walls and the Phalericon Wall, perhaps along a road parallel to Syngrou Avenue, to which we will return in a while. Furthermore, the bath of the Mysteries should have taken place at the beach between Paleo and Neo Phaleron, a beach that does not exist today, having disappeared under the embankment works of the coast during the 1970s in the Greek Junta times.

I'd like us to allow this desire for the sea to hover as a question to be answered: SEAWARD. THE SOUND of the waves from the hill clearly resonates in the Mind of the residents even when it has been completely erased as an actual sound in their environment. This paper is no more than the construction of a brief anthropological soundscape for this desire, using the sound of the music that accompanies the imaginary descent to the sea.

Continuing on the track with Pausanias from the seashore toward the Acropolis, we will now borrow Plato's words from the beginning of the *Symposium*:

It so happened the other day that I was coming up to the city from my home in Phaleron (*εἰς ἄστὴν οἴκοθεν ἀνιῶν Φαληρόθεν*). An acquaintance coming up from behind me, saw me from a distance and called out to me, even making a joke in the way he addressed me: "Hey, denizen of Phaleron – he called out – hey, Apollodorus, won't you wait up?" So I did stop and waited for him. And he, as soon as he reached me: "Actually, Apollodorus, I was looking for you – said he – because I meant to ask you about the conversation of Agathon and Socrates and Alcibiades and all the others present at that symposium about erotic speeches; I wonder, you see, what kind of speeches these might have been... What are you standing there for, why haven't you started on the telling already? It is a far way to the city, and as we go, you can do the talking and I'll do the listening" (*τί οὖν, ἔφη, 'οὐ διηγῆσω μοι; πάντως δὲ ἡ ὁδὸς ἢ εἰς ἄστὴν ἐπιτηδεῖα πορευομένοις καὶ λέγειν καὶ ἀκούειν*). So, then, we spoke of those things as we walked and so it was, as I've said at the beginning, that I have repeated them and learned them by heart (*οὐκ ἀμελετήτως ἔχω - ἀφ' οὗ δ' ἐγὼ Σωκράτει συνδιατρίβω καὶ ἐπιμελὲς πεποιήμαι ἐκάστης ἡμέρας εἰδέναι ὅτι ἂν λέγῃ ἢ πράττῃ*).

This excerpt is the preamble to the *Symposium*. The way taken by Apollodorus, is one of the two roads either externally or on the inside of the Phaleron fortification wall. The road unfolds, according to Kaupert, following the morphology of the landscape of Attica, and it enters the city through the Itonian gates, also known as *Ἀλαδὲ* (Seaward) gates.

Let me point out that what concerns us here is a preamble, an introduction. The word is explained by Plato in the *Laws*, as follows:

All speeches ... and everything that reserves a role for the voice, contain preambles, which I would say are preliminary passages that amount to a melodic warming up for the exposition that is to follow

Plato, *Laws*, 722d

This introduction is the passage that OPENS OUT the road we wish to walk upon; in a musical score it would be a first part, while in narration it is a first speech. What is interesting here is that the present preamble places us on a road, both literally and figuratively, literally because the two interlocutors are following the route from Phaleron to the city, a “fitting” route (*ἐπιτηδεΐα*, “appropriate or adopted to a purpose”) for the reproduction of erotic speeches (*πορευομένοις καὶ λέγειν καὶ ἀκούειν*), and, therefore, well suited to the duration and content of the Erotic Speeches of the *Symposium*. Also, the preamble ushers us on the metaphoric path of Apollodorus’ narrative which last is about erotic speeches - “erotic”, i.e., on the subject of eros, but also of an erotic nature.

It is certainly no accident (and here we may refer to Derrida’s essay *What is Poetry*) that Apollodorus states that he does not “lack training” in those erotic speeches; that’s to say, he has trained by repeating them over and over, and having memorized them, he knows them “by heart”.

Preamble toward the city with the repetition of the speeches about Eros starting from the sea by heart: I consider this image equivalent to that of the well on the Acropolis, with the sound of the sea inside it. And that one in turn, I consider equivalent to Papaioannou’s introductory improvisation (*taximi*) in his instrumental piece *Dusk at Tzitzifies*.²

Papaioannou, a refugee from Asia Minor at 1922, after the Asia Minor Destruction, as it is called in modern Greece, grew up in a suburb of Peireus, Tzitzifies. This is a suburb adjacent to Phaleron, and together they at that point form the geographical boundary of Athens to the seafront. Papaioannou mentions in an interview that there may have been better musicians than himself, but that he was unsurpassable in soccer and fishing, in which he had been tutored by the famous Zepos.

Let us consider now that we have “come up”, as the ancient text says, that is, that we’ve made our way inland; after we arrive, we will then, skipping a few centuries, take the road down to the sea, this time following the layout of the modern city of Athens.

OIME – Road – Syngrou Avenue – Modernité

Syngrou Avenue, the wide and straight thoroughfare connecting Athens with Phaleron, though begun in 1898, was not completed until Eleftherios Venizelos was prime minister (1928-1932). The Avenue passed by several refugee settlements of 1922, ones that became big neighborhoods of Athens, such as Neos Kosmos (Dourgouti), Agios Sostis, Nea Smyrne, and Tzitzifies. The road construction proceeded in parallel with the earthworks necessary for connecting the sea suburbs with electricity and water, resulting in an upgrading of the residents' standard of living.

a. Seferis (established poetry) and the Sea

In 1929, George (Giorgos) Theotokas wrote about the recently completed Syngrou Avenue:

Immediately after the Destruction, cars started multiplying at an extraordinary rate... The capital, whose population had virtually doubled, was changing day by day... Speed and the postwar noises were taking over, destroying the idyllic *naiveté* and humble poetry of Old Athens. Only the Parthenon remained unchanged on its pedestal, except nobody gave it a second look amidst this overall readjustment of the rhythm of living...³

All of it made an impression on our voracious youth: the straight line of asphalt, the sensation of speed, of flight, the unbounded sea a few minutes away. It was all brand new, a new style of living, a new era.

Day and night, Syngrou Avenue conveys towards the shore of Phaleron, the newly born and as yet unexpressed rhythms of a potent lyricism that is seeking potent poets. An aesthetics is being spontaneously formed in the very air that we breathe.⁴

Heeding his call, George Seferis leaves us three additional poems that relate to the Avenue⁵: *Syngrou Avenue* (1930), dedicated to Giorgos Theotokas “who discovered it”, *Syngrou Avenue II* (1935), and *A Word about Summer* (1936).

In the first, the erotic desire is clearly stated and instigates *The Movement Toward the Sea* as an inner imperative “when you let your thought and your heart become one”.

Seferis writes:

Around 1930, however, things change. What defines the quest of the young is a kind of island mentality. The horizon broadens. The dusty side streets and rooms are left behind. The Aegean with its islands, the mythology of the sea, travelling in no matter which direction, are what moves [them] and what they are endeavoring to express.⁶

In Tziouvas, who, in his book on the generation of the 30's, analyzes the Aegean as a "nation-scape", we read:

Representing a synthesis of a topography and an aesthetics, the mythology of the Aegean is a metaphor for what was at stake for the generation of the '30s, its aspiration to be Greek and to be modern... Correlatively, the Aegean is not merely represented as a landscape but is also invented as a place.⁷

The Movement Toward the Sea is the first poem written by Seferis in free verse – as if the liberating power of the route, the desire for the sea, had freed writing from the regularity of rhyme, establishing in its place the flow of inner rhythm, the personal "idiorhythm" which Seferis' poetry has borne ever since.

Syngrou Avenue, 1930

*When the smile
breathing beside you conquers you, tries to submit and
doesn't consent*

*when the dizziness that remains from your wandering
among books moves from your mind to the pepper
trees on either side*

*when you leave the petrified ship traveling with broke
rigging towards the depths
the arch with gold decoration
the columns whose burden makes them more narrow*

*when you leave behind you the bodies deliberately carved
for counting and for hoarding riches
the soul that, whatever you do, doesn't match your own soul
the toll you pay
that small feminine face in the cradle shining in the sun*

*when you let your heart and your thought become one
with the blackish river that stretches, stiffens and goes away:*

*Break Ariadne's thread and look!
The blue body of the mermaid.*

(translated by Edmund Keeley and Philip Sherrard)

The avenue: the pepper trees to the left and right, the sea at the end of the road, the blue body of the mermaid. Syngrou Avenue as a forward thrust, a thrust that leaves behind the Daze of the internal world of Books, the past (pillars, fossilized boat) the world chasing after profits. An erotic thrust by the body “a smile” breathing nearby, a thrust towards freedom.

At the poem’s conclusion, this union of heart and thought with the “blackish river that stretches, stiffens and goes away,” is their union with the straight road, the asphalt of Syngrou stretching forward, which latter leads the body and propels it onward. The thread of Ariadne snaps — the journey in the Labyrinth, life metaphorically as the cumbersome and slow finding of the way, is overcome by the perfectly straight line of the connection to the sea, a physical desire as sturdy as a taut rope.

In the first part of Seferis’ second poem (*Syngrou Avenue II*, 1935) the Avenue and everything it entails symbolically and as a physical aesthetics, instead of being an imperative, is now in the past tense. In the second part, there follows the satirical description of a political dream, which description is bitterly ironic about royalty. The poem was written only days after the fabricated referendum of Georgios Kondylis’ dictatorial regime which reinstated the king as head of state of the Greek democracy. Thus, the idea of freedom and forward movement evoked by Syngrou Avenue, is here canceled out by the political reality of the times.

The poem starts with the road as a bridge with two coves and two summits; the first verse renders visual the connections, the road’s two endpoints, the first of these being the place of departure, the city center of Athens including the summit of the Acropolis, and the second being the point of arrival, the sea bay, and those two are mysteriously redoubled as if the summit were also to be found at the end, and the sea bay at the beginning. Here, stated in as many words, Syngrou Avenue clearly resolves into the anticipation of the view of the sea and the beckoning of the unknown which the sea entails. The sea awaits “adorned with boats and ships” and, in it, “the body of the mermaid naked”, which I read as a feminine incarnation of the sea or as an erotic embodiment of the desire for the sea on the horizon of the gaze:

Syngrou Avenue II

The avenue of Syngrou, the bridge with two coves and two summits,
which tested us and we tested it, abandoning the prudent texts,
till we found the sea, full of sorrow and tenderness, peaceful, pale blue,
written in islands, adorned with boats and ships;
the avenue of Syngrou wide and secret, hiding and delaying then suddenly revealing
the body of the mermaid naked, with hair unbraided to the skyline
with rosy skin, immersed slightly in the wine colored water, her chest
upturned and reddish at the tips as the sun was starting to set;
the road with the tame pepper trees, yet the road who provided us training

for leaving at some point friends, lovers and music
to set out without knowing where the road may take you

25-11-1935

(translated by Konstantinos Matsoukas)

The third poem is written in the fall of 1936. Here, autumn seems to stand for the Metaxas dictatorship which had just come into power. Syngrou Avenue continues to be the desire for the sea and for a freedom cancelled out.

A word for summer

We've returned to autumn again; summer,
like an exercise book we're tired of writing in, remains
full of deletions, abstract designs,
question marks in the margin; we've returned
to the season of eyes gazing
into the mirror under the electric light
closed lips and people strangers
in rooms in streets under the pepper-trees
while the headlights of cars massacre
thousands of pale masks.
We've returned; we always set out to return
to solitude, a fistful of earth, to the empty hands.
And yet I used to love Syngrou Avenue
the double rise and fall of the great road
bringing us out miraculously to the sea
the eternal sea, to cleanse us of our sins;

....

Autumn, 1936

(translated by Edmund Keeley and Philip Sherrard.)

On the one hand, the present – autumn – estranges people who turn away to their reflections in the mirror, or who even look at each other through mirrors, in rooms or in the streets under the pepper trees. And on the other, Syngrou Avenue and the “miraculous” joy of the movement toward the sea, “the road’s twofold cradling”, are symbolized in a summertime which has been and is now gone (“I once loved”).

b. Rembetika songs (underground poetry) and the Sea

The poetic discourse of the intelligentsia (which we have just read) about Syngrou Avenue overshadows the contemporary discourse of the margin, which relishes the sea physically without any of the spirit's dilemmas. Adjoining Syngrou Avenue, the initial bare space is gradually crowded by refugee settlements from Asia Minor such as Tzitzifies and Nea Smyrni.

As we have already read, the twofold cradling of the large road leading to the sea "miraculously" absolves the bourgeois poet and intellectual "from sin" – here the presence of guilt is acknowledged, in that the sea is for washing away the evil which one bears within.

By contrast, the object of Markos Vamvakaris' desire is right in the water, wearing a bathing suit and rising up like a dove. We again come across the implication of summer which, in Seferis, encompasses the miraculous. Here, though, the miracle takes place in the summertime body of the beloved: wily Mario, little dove, you justly supplant the heavy blue mermaid of the finicky bourgeois poet of Asia Minor stock.

*In Phaleron where you bathe*⁸, 1937

(Verse – Music – Performed by: Markos Vamvakaris)

In Phaleron where you bathe
you turn and you dovetail
Soon as I saw you in your bathing suit
wily Mario, I was en route

In the course of the 20th century, the fate of that road that conveys everyone, whether rich or poor, to the sea, continues to be that of transporting crowds on a sensual outing, going for a swim in summer, feasting on *kalamari*, whitebait, and seafood, and listening to music by the sea. An inexpensive hedonism for everyman is on offer by the combination of the weather, the season, the sea and its beaches.

Postwar, in the seaside settlement of Tzitzifies, one after the other entertainment venues appear of various descriptions – some are open-air, or in enclosed courtyards like the "Phalirikon", and some are sheltered, like the "Kalamatianos". There, for a minority clientele originally consisting of marginals and for well-to-do Athenian society later on, the rembetika forms of music are performed by important musicians and, in the course of time, by popular singers.

Kolonaki, Tzitzifies⁹, 1948

(Verse – Music – Performed by: Markos Vamvakaris)

Starting out from Kolonaki
coming down to Tzitzifies
where the chords of bouzoukaki
while the time away in sweetness

Here come luxury cars
ladies famous and aristocratic
dandies, businessmen and stars
beauties fine and charismatic

All who pine for the sea
come our music to imbibe
our bohemian tunes and voices
spreading beauty far and wide

With the arrival to Tzitzifies of Kolonaki, a rich and aristocratic neighborhood in the center of Athens, starting in the '50s, the profile of Syngrou Avenue changes, with the enclosed entertainment venues gradually outnumbering the open-air ones.¹⁰

Trambarifas¹¹, 1951

(Verse: Alecos Sakellarios and Christos Yannakopoulos, Music by Michalis Soyoul)

Hey, Manolis Tramparifa
Put the double tariff,
padding pull straight
on the Syngrou Avenue.
Tonight the girl wants to go to the sea
and I never spoiled her a favor

All day work
fatigue and standing
and the heat, what a damage,
it makes you fainting.
Tonight that I have exploded from heat
I like cool night and vagrancy.

Seafood bars
beers and calamari,
guitars, tambourines and violins
and lying on the beach.
Tonight that there is full money in pocket
Dudes will plow the Phaliron

The song *Trambarifas* (1951) by Sakellarios-Yannakopoulos was composed at a time when the “high-class rebetiko” (“*archontorempetiko*”) was flourishing, at the beginning of the ’50s, and it refers to a taxi driver who would drive down Syngrou Avenue to the Phaliron districts near the sea in order to have plenty of fun and joy via food, music, drinks, and lying on the beach. This image was also well established by the Greek film making industry of the ’50s and ’60s.

During the remainder of the 20th century the enclosed venues grew in size and numbers along with others which were sex-focused, like the strip clubs that are still in evidence today. After the ’70s, the transsexual sex trade inaugurated a new period of marginal street entertainment which continues to the present, though it now targets a wealthy audience. The history of public entertainment in Greece, and its topography in the Greek urban center, and more particularly in the streets of Athens, has yet to be written. Incidentally, the mythology of the sea and of summertime hedonism for all is by now well established in Greek film making.

Epilogue -Finish/Noose

Making one more leap, we’ll continue the seaward descent all the way to the finishing line. At the beginning of the 21st century, in lieu of the thrust toward openness, enclosed “culture centers” are springing up like the new pepper trees by the roadside. (Witness the “*Stegi Grammaton kai Technon*” – the Onassis Cultural Centre – and the new multiplex cinemas along Syngrou Avenue)¹².

At the end of the thoroughfare, the embankment filling of Phaliron Bay (1970’s) and the Olympic constructions (2000’s) have eradicated some of the sea. Nonetheless, as one rides straight down Syngrou, the sea is always there, glimmering ahead and inviting. Even so, the end of the road is capped by a recent fill creating a large expanse of land, and Tzitzifies is now at quite some distance from the water.

The Taekwondo stadium, shopping malls and multiplex cinemas now occupy what used to be the seafront of Tzitzifies. In the last two years the National Library as well as the National Lyric Stage have been situated on this plot of land. They were founded by the private foundation of Stavros Niarchos.

A great arterial noose is tied up around the end of the road.

The sea as a view or as desire is set apart from the sea as a physical experience of catharsis and pleasure.

Noose and Land, in place of the open Sea. Is it a metropolitan management in the 21st century towards privatization, or the psychoanalytic disavowal of the body and of desire? The latter is a symbolic answer to be found at the beginning. As we have seen in Plutarch's story about the Mysteries and the Descent towards the sea, the cities of Athens and Pireus together are seen as a body with an upper and a lower part. The lower part, the part which hosts the bodily needs and their metabolistic functions, together with sexuality and desire, had to be sacrificed for the sake of the upper part, the Athenian centre.

Let's read Pausanias on Acropolis again, and we will find another version of this sacrifice:

To the right of the monumental gateway (*Propylea*) there is the temple of *Apteros Niki* (Wingless Victory). From this location one has an unobstructed view of the sea, and it is said that this is where Aigeus leapt from and killed himself... Seeing the boat return bearing black sails, Aigeus, thinking his son dead, threw himself off to his death.

Pausanias I, XXII,4

Ever since the mythical beginning of the founding of Athens, the Aegean, which the generation of the '30s reinvented as a kind of "nationescape", encompasses erotic desire alongside death and mourning, a mourning at the outset of Theseus' journey (to Crete) and mourning at the end with the inadvertent death of Aegeus, whose fall christens the sea with his name. Every Greek sea has a dead personality in it who falls from on high, whether it be an Icarus or Elli or Aegeus. Mythically, the fate of the desire for heights is sealed with death in the sea. Besides exerting the attraction of the physical joy of summer, the sea is also dark, impermeable, dangerous. The sea encompasses the desire for the impossible.

As early as 1935, Seferis refers to Syngrou Avenue and its summer in the past tense – as a paradise deprived of physical joy and political freedom. Such is the rhetorical practice of the grouchy poet who continually sinks heavily into his past. Seferis seems to have lost the sea and the road to it, even while they were in front of him.

Conversely, even the buried beach today can merely be a call to its rediscovery even further away. The Athenian's involvement in sea-related leisure is beginning to be serviced by the new Attica highway which now leads to the side of Cape Sounion, the point of Pausanias' arrival, the sentinel of Athens at the sea, or more far away to the islands from the port of Lavrion. The sea front recedes in terms of kilometers, but it is out there if one can drive to it, being particularly close for any resident of the northern suburbs.

As for the poor and the migrants, they will continue to find the seaside to be a place for free recreation and sea-bathing by riding down Syngrou Avenue in the crowded buses. They only need to take a turn and continue eastward in order to get to the beaches of Palaion Phaleron, as used to be the practice back in 1931:

In *Leisure Hours* (*Ωρες Αργίας*) Theotokas, exhausted after a day's work, passes by Sina Street and writes:

Phaleron and off we go! The young ticket collectors called out at the top of Sina Street.

And further down:

Phaleron and off we go! What joy! Everything is possible! Everything is possible! An irrepressible sense of well-being flooded through me all at once, pulling me forcefully towards the realization of my most ambitious schemes. I felt I had alighted on the wings of I know not what magical bird, redeemed from the weight, the paltriness, the pettiness of daily life, setting out on a journey through the land of my dreams. I longed for everything suddenly and felt that I was able to have it. It seemed as if the universe was my property through and through, the visible and the invisible, since I was capable of everything. All I needed to do was reach out and I could enjoy anything whatsoever that crossed my mind. There was no boundary any more between the world of hopes and dreams and actual life. There was nothing beyond my reach... Everything was plausible, the most irrational, the most incomprehensible, the most impossible things. Everything, even happiness.¹³

Images



Figure 1. Aerial image of Attica, Greece. (Courtesy of Google Earth)

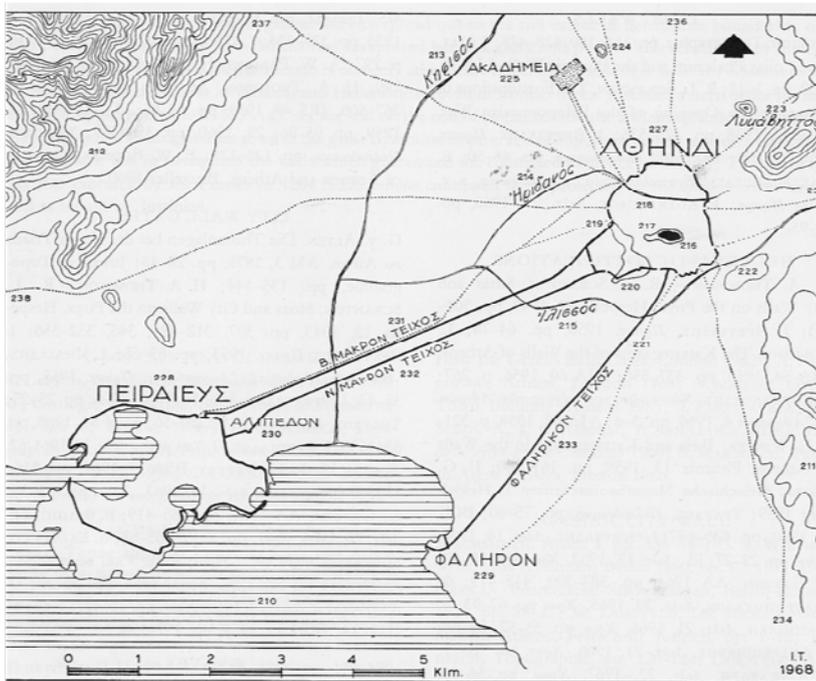


Figure 2. The Long Walls of Athens. [image 17 from John Travlos, *Η Πολεοδομική Εξέλιξις των Αθηνών*, Athens, Kapon Editions, 1993 (1960)]



Figure 3. The ancient Itonian gates of Athens. (Ernst Curtius and Johann August Kaupert, *Karten von Attika: Karten*, Berlin, 1895-1903)



Figure 4. Giannis Papaioannou (1913-72) playing bouzouki. (<http://www.iconsday.com>)



Figure 5. View of Syngrou Avenue from the 1950's. (Courtesy of [briefingnews.gr](https://www.briefingnews.gr), <https://www.briefingnews.gr/ellada/poia-einai-i-adeia-leoforos-tis-athinas#sthash.3KeAvneY.dpbs>).



Figure 6. The Kalamatianos' group, 1948. (Courtesy of Matt Barrett's Greece Travel Guide, <http://www.greecetravel.com/music/rembetika/lyrics/index.htm>)

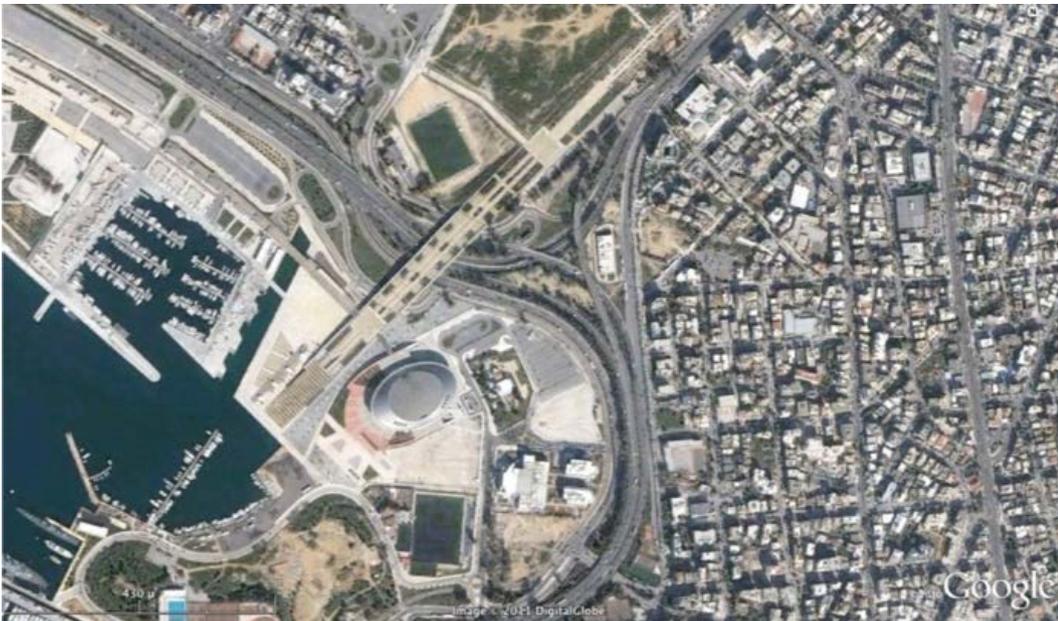


Figure 7. Aerial view of the seafront of Tzitzifies. (Courtesy of Google Earth)

Notes

- 1 The same battle between the two gods for the city of Athena are also depicted on the Parthenon itself. Erechtheion Temple is the built narration of the myth.
- 2 *Dusk at Tzitzifies*, Youtube Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E-rpCikqbqk> .
- 3 Theotokas Giorgos, *Argo*, 1930.
- 4 Fotini Margariti reads the above as follows: “*By means of the trick of Syngrou Avenue, the ‘30s generation is attempting to introduce modernism into the greek world of ideas.*” On the basis of the third poem in Seferis’ Autumn 1936, *A word about Summer*, which refers to the Avenue, Margariti speaks about the impasse of modernism and the victory of the ancient greek past: “*These verses by Seferis affirm, among other things, the entrapment of that generation in the ideology of ancient ruins. The flight forward, as it is symbolized by the robust Syngrou Avenue of G. Theotokas in 1929, remains, finally, unrealized.*”
- 5 “*...It must have been, if my memory serves me, a spring afternoon in the ‘40s. We were conversing at the house of a foreigner who wished to know, fairly wryly, what new thing our generation contributed to the world of letters (...) Syngrou Avenue, I replied.*”, G. Seferis, *Epoches* magazine 1967.
- 6 Seferis Giorgos, *Dokimes*, vol. A, “Notes for a talk to the children”, 167-168, Athens: Ikaros, 1974, as quoted by Tziouvas D.
- 7 Tziouvas Dimitris, *The Myth of the Generation of the Thirties: Modernity, Greekness and Cultural Ideology*, 364, Athens: Polis, 2011.
- 8 *In Phaleron where you bathe*, Youtube Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HicYfxfgP-c> .
- 9 *Kolonaki, Tzitzifies*, Youtube Link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LFNoylBk_Gw .
- 10 Starting with Triana, by Vassilis Cheilas, which featured Papaioannou and Chiotis.
- 11 *Trambarifas*, Youtube Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cYKE7N-xY-8> .
- 12 Tina Mandilara, “From tramp, to lady. The new face of Syngrou Avenue”, last modified 12/11/2010 <http://www.protothema.gr/bigfish/article/?aid=90363> .
- 13 Theotokas Giorgos, *Ωρες Αργίας, (Hours of Leisure)*, p.16 and p.32-33, Athens: Estia Editions, 1931. Mourning and Melancholy have recently been taken into account as the features of Modern Greece. See: Tzirtzilakis Giorgos, *Υπο-νεωτερικότητα και εργασία του πένθους*, Athens: Kastaniotis Editions, 2014. Vassilis Lambropoulos, “*Left Melancholy in the Greek Poetry Generation of the 2000s after the Crisis of Revolution and Representation*”, In the *JMGS, The Journal of Modern Greek Studies, Occasional Papers*, Edited by Neni Panourgia, 2016.

About the Author

Phoebe Giannisi (phoebegiannisi.net), born in Athens, is an architect and a poet. Her work investigates the connections of poetics with body and place. She is the author of six books of poetry, including *Homerica* (*Ομηρικά*, Athens : 2009, forthcoming in English, translated by Brian Sneed, World Poetry Books, 2017). She holds a PhD in Classics from Lyon II-Lumière, published as *Récits des Voies. Chant et cheminement en Grèce archaïque* (Grenoble: Jérôme Millon, 2006.) She is also the co-author of *Classical Greek Architecture: The Construction of the Modern*, (Paris: Flammarion, 2004). In 2010 she was co-curator for the Greek Pavilion of the 12th International Architecture Exhibition of Venice. In October 2016, she presented her performance *Nomos-The Land Song* in New York. A 2015–2016 Humanities Fellow of Columbia University, Giannisi is an Associate Professor at the University of Thessaly.

Acts of Symbiosis: A Literary Analysis of the Work of Rogelio Salmons and Alvar Aalto

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Abstract

Presenting a double reading of architectural spaces, this article aims to bring together works of the architects Alvar Aalto and Rogelio Salmons and identify some shared themes in their architectural approaches. While using literary description as a mode of architectural investigation, it shows how the use of writing in architectural analysis can bring to the surface some of the more ephemeral aspects of architecture, such as embodied perception, memory and use - aspects that contribute to the very meaning of architecture but that are hard to describe in purely factual terms.

By experiential descriptions, the article will give an account of two projects of each architect, based on my own repeated visits to these buildings over the past two decades. The projects include *Centro Gaitan* in Bogotá, the *Virgilio Barco Library* in Bogotá, Colombia (Rogelio Salmons, 2001), *Helsinki University of Technology* and the *Viipuri City Library* of Alvar Aalto. The comparative descriptions will show that the resonances between the work of both architects goes beyond their similar use of brick and their preferences for certain geometries, but rather concern the humanism that lay at the basis of both their architectural practices, a human interest translated into form, materiality and light.

Despite having operated their practices in the very different cultural, geographical and climatological conditions of Finland and Colombia, the approaches of Aalto and Salmons in regard to the experiential, material and social aspects of architecture seem rather similar.

The Colombian architect Rogelio Salmons had worked in Europe with Le Corbusier and, as a young architect, had met Alvar Aalto in the post-war years. A first glance of his impressive brick buildings in Bogotá, Colombia, built between the late 1960's and the early years of the 21st century, evokes a reverberance of some of the architectural features of Aalto's architecture, which seem to have adapted to the Colombian climate and landscape in a natural way. The brick walls, along with almost woven textures that at times allow sound and light to move between spaces, so present in many of Salmons's works, project a strong resonance with Aalto's brick explorations such as in his experimental house in Muuratsalo, Finland, while the fan-shaped auditoriums and the circular roof-lights of Salmons's public buildings indeed remind of Aalto's most prominent institutional works. Despite having operated their practice in very different cultural, geographical and climatological conditions in Finland and Colombia, the approaches of Aalto and Salmons in regard to the experiential, material and social aspects of architecture seem rather similar. I will give an account of two projects of each architect, based on my own repeated visits to these buildings over the past two decades. The projects include *Centro Gaitán* and the *Virgilio Barco* Library in Bogotá by Rogelio Salmons and the *Helsinki University of Technology* and the *Viipuri City Library* of Alvar Aalto.

In Summer 2003, on the occasion of being awarded the prestigious Alvar Aalto Medal, the Colombian architect Rogelio Salmons presented a lecture at the Aalto symposium in Jyväskylä, Finland. His was a plea for an architecture that “must establish a symbiotic relationship between its existential, cultural, geographic and historic needs”¹. Especially facing the large societal problems of war and poverty that have been challenged Colombia in the past decades, the responsibility of architecture to provide meaning to the everyday life of people becomes all an “absolute necessity”. As one of the attendants of the lecture at the time, I was particularly struck by the strong conviction that architecture as “the most useful of trades and the most humane of arts”², has the task of providing a meaningful environment for people's lives, even in severe conditions. Suddenly, the design of architectural details, the choice of materiality, and the working with light were not just artistic explorations but real and important contributions to a meaningful appreciation of life, despite everything else. And I understood that the resonances between the work of both architects went beyond their similar use of brick and their preferences for certain geometries: it was the humanism that formed the basis of both their architectural practices, a human interest translated into form, materiality and light.

While being embedded in modern discussions and aware of the avant-garde of their time - Aalto as a rising international figure with his contributions to the world fair in New York in 1930, Salmons as apprentice of Le Corbusier in the 1950's, and in Colombia in the 1960's, a key figure in the architectural scene—both architects sought a deep relationship with their local geography, climate and traditions. Salmons, in his before-mentioned lecture, regarded architecture as a social responsibility; Aalto similarly considered architecture a service providing qualitative space to residents. As Finnish architect Kristian Gullichsen (who, as son of Aalto's clients for Villa Mairea, grew up in the midst of Aalto's architecture) stated, empathy was at stake in Aalto's work in multiple ways: "an emphasis on the physical and psychological comfort of the occupants, the ambition to balance the abstract with familiar motifs, and a tactile sensitivity for materials and textures"³.

While the approaches of Salmons and Aalto have many aspects in common, and the acknowledgement of the Aalto medal witnesses a recognition of the familiarity between the architects at least from the side of the Finnish jury,⁴ the links between their work have never been thoroughly studied—at least I have not found any scholarly articles about their mutual influence.⁵ Strangely enough, even in the writing of key architectural historian Kenneth Frampton who knew the work of both architects, the resonances between their works was not mentioned. In Frampton's article about the legacy of Aalto, Salmons is not mentioned at all,⁶ while in his later article about the work of Salmons, Aalto was absent as well.⁷ With this contribution, I will identify some of their common threads, which go beyond the mere similarity of their formal and material language, and will do so by merging architectural analysis and literary writing.

Comparative Literary Description as a Mode of Architectural Investigation

In his address at the Aalto Symposium, held in Jyväskylä's university auditorium designed by Alvar Aalto, Rogelio Salmons spoke about the symbiotic relationship between architecture and its existential, cultural and geographical environment. He pondered as well a number of more concrete symbioses that he as architect tried to address: architecture-landscape, silhouettes- transparencies, stone – water, the rain- the sun..."⁸ Such pairs of notions, related to the perception of architecture, and sometimes to specific temporalities of experience (the rain-the sun, for instance) different but in relation to one another and are hard to express in conventional analytical terms. As I argued earlier⁹, the traditional tools of architectural research, often foregrounding rational and formal modes of thinking, fail to address the fundamental ambiguities of architecture, such as the seemingly opposite notions subject-object, author-reader and reality-imagination; fields of tension which relate to the questions of how architecture is experienced, used and imagined. By developing a literary way of writing as a mode of architectural investigation, such ambiguities can be addressed. Literary writing deals almost by definition with subjective experience and may give objects

identity; it experiments with the interactivity between the writer who initiates a story and the reader who co-produces it; it balances between a given reality and the imagination of other possible situations. Therefore, in this investigation of the work of two architects who sought to offer through their buildings a heightened perception of places and an active symbiosis between different phenomena, I will seek to use literary language to highlight aspects of embodied perception, memory and everyday spatial practice.

Two pairs of projects of Aalto and Salmona will be described from an experiential perspective, from my personal recollection of repeated visits to the buildings. First, I will discuss the role of time in the architectural experience of the Aalto's City Library in Viipuri, Russia, and Salmona's Centro Gaitán in Bogotá. Both buildings were in a state of ruin at the time of my visits. Having considered the embodied experience of these works, I will move to the second set of projects: the main building of Helsinki University of Technology by Aalto and the Virgilio Barco library by Salmona, again in Bogotá. From these projects, the social dimension of their works will be highlighted, and I will discuss the role of craftsmanship in their works. Finally, the interrelationship between the social and the experiential will come to the fore, and it will lead us back to the first symbiosis proposed by Salmona: architecture and landscape.

The Experience of Time Past: The Ruins of the Viipuri Library and Centro Gaitán.

I: Viipuri City Library, Viipuri / Vyborg, Russia (Alvar Aalto 1927-35)

I visited the Viipuri library in 1998, when I was a student of architecture in Helsinki. It was probably early March, and the landscape we crossed by bus was still partly covered in snow. We first visited Aalto's Vuoksenniska church in Imatra, at the Eastern border of Finland. A silent setting, trees in snow, the white church with its roof as heavy wings. Inside: the light, the white, the harmony of repeating shapes. When approaching the border of Russia, the landscape changed and the temperature rose, the snow became brownish, partly melting. Viipuri is a town that used to belong to Finland before the second World War and became part of Russia afterwards. In the 1930's, when Viipuri was a Finnish thriving harbour town with green esplanades and a museum at the seaside, Alvar Aalto built its city library. It marked Aalto's transition from a classicist architecture (still visible in the competition entry) to modern architecture with his already recognisable own signature; the wooden details, such as the curved ceiling of the auditorium, and the circular roof lights illuminating the reading room from above. But in 1998, the library had not seen any maintenance for decades and was almost falling apart, though still in use.

City after war, after silence or cold
nothing remains but all reminds
of what was, still is present, but old.
Stones remain, the streets,
and people still walk along the esplanade
sell apples at the market, stare over frozen sea.

In this old world: the library.
She enters the slender doors
in glass and steel. Her boots
leave meltwater on the floor.

She climbs the stair towards the reading room
her hand on the wooden railing
following its bends. She enters.

Three buckets in corners, the books still on shelves.
The ceiling leaks water and abundant light
falls on the reading tables
and the trodden floor.

Though damp and cold embraces her,
leads her eyes, her steps
to the next flight of stairs
and invites her to sit down
and read, alone.

II: Cultural Center Jorge Eliécer Gaitán in Bogotá (Rogelio Salmons, 1980-1989, unfinished)

Near the historical city center of Bogotá, in a residential neighborhood, lies a modern ruin. Built as a place for remembrance, the memorial for the local politician Gaitán was never finished due to a disagreement between the architect and the client. The building was conceived as a cultural center, archive and memorial for Gaitán, who was assassinated in 1948, an event which ignited violence in Colombia for decades to come. The building was designed as brick volume, embracing a series of diagonal courtyards. The series of connected patios and the roof terrace at the eastern edge of the building frame the mountains as if the densely built urban fabric around it does not exist. The geometry of the building, with triangular shapes and steps, bears resemblance to pre-Hispanic architectural figures.¹⁰

I remembered the junction between the busy Caracas road and the Arzobispo river from my first visit to Bogota in 2001. At that time the road was still full of colorful busses and their dark grey exhaust fumes. At the junction, a patch of green on the slopes of the small river—a creek, rather—some vendors had displayed cow skins, trying to sell them to pedestrians crossing the street. By the time of my next visit, some 14 years later, the buses had been replaced by modern ones, the Transmilenio transport system, which while first having greatly improved mobility in the city, had become exhausted within the fast-growing city.

One vendor used the same spot as before, the small oasis in the hectic city life. I had arrived with a group of international students from TU Delft, searching to understand Colombian architecture as well as the specific conditions for architectural practice in this particular cultural, political and geological environment.

We turn left from the big street and follow the creek. And immediately we are away from the rush: the lush green river bedding, trees, on the side two- to three-storey buildings. Turn right again. A quiet street, small single-family houses with woodcut balconies, some with graffiti, not all of them in use. Then the brick wall, and a steel fence around it. We wait in front of the fence until a guard comes and opens. We enter. A few steps, then the small, well maintained garden below us, at the very center of the building. Carefully manicured, intense green ivy plants climb over the half-high brick walls embracing the court, in the middle the circular grave with a red rose shrub, in blossom. Around this small well-maintained glimpse of human care, the bare concrete arcades offer a grey and dilapidated decor, and behind them, the brick structure with its large openings offers views to other spaces, all open to the elements. A sad and uncanny atmosphere, merging carefulness and decay, monumentality and uncertainty.

We move up the ramps and stairs, obliquely crossing the building, and find ourselves between the city and the mountain, in something simultaneously old and new. Some floors and stairs cannot be accessed because of missing parts and railings; furniture is stored in corners, a cupboard, a pile of chairs, lying as a colorful work of disorderly art in the monochrome building. Light enters though the absent roof and through the finely detailed circular openings in the wall, connecting rooms in visual axes. And with our visual perspectives, temporalities start to merge: we are here, today in 2015, we are here, connected by the small court below to a life that ended in 1948. Between these moments lie the painful decades of war and poverty, and we see the resilience of the city, the mountains that remained the same. We are here, and we seem to be connected to much older landscapes, through the shapes, squares, stairs, axes, through the stone rising from the land. We move, diagonally, up to the roof, across the courtyards, across time.

Moving towards and through both buildings, touched by the passing of time, stripped from the conventional layer of maintenance, cleanliness and—in the case of the Gaitán center—daily use, arises an awareness of the one very essential aspect of architectural experience: the sheer movement through space, in time. The experience recalls Bernard Tschumi's reading of the Villa Savoye in Paris in a similar state, arguing that perhaps the most architectural aspect about the building was the state of decay it was in. In "Architecture and Transgression", Tschumi describes how his visit, as a student in 1965, to the dilapidated near-ruin of Le Corbusier's Villa Savoy revealed for him the essence of architecture¹¹. For Tschumi, the state of the building revealed the power of decay, the vulnerability of architecture, the naked essence of the project. For me, these moments when the poor condition of the buildings of Aalto and Salmona was paired with a sense of presence that the spaces still seemed to transpire, were equally impressive.

In my description of the buildings I chose a poetic approach, bringing into play phenomenological aspects such as bodily perception and memory. This way of writing foregrounds sensory-perception bodily movement through space, and evokes some kind of melancholy. In Viipuri, the details came very prominently to the fore: the staircase with the hand railing, the stairs in the reading room, the light falling through the roof lights. Further, the movement through space was clearly a vertical movement, the different levels connected by open stairs. In Bogotá, the composition of the courtyards and the framing of the views were most prominent in the description, while the geometry and the use of brick generated the association of being in history. Indeed, as Ricardo Castro eloquently brought to the fore in his text *Mnemosina*, referring to the ancient Greek goddess of memory, mother of all arts, Salmona never stopped to stress the importance of history in his projects¹². In both projects, the architects have established a contrast between a rather simple exterior form and a more complex routing through the building. In Aalto's case, the section with the different interconnected floors gives way to an inviting experience, and one room leads in a natural way to the other. In Salmona's Centro Gaitán, the diagonal composition of the sequence of courtyards, paired with the ramps and stairs, creates a more complex, oblique movement through the building than one would expect from the exterior volume.

Of course, as argued by Böhme, atmospheric experience requires both subject and object, and is influenced by external conditions.¹³In Centro Gaitán, the fact that we were with a group may have generated the powerful experience of the movement through the building, as the moving figures started to populate the otherwise empty built landscape in a scenic way. In Viipuri, the general state of decay of the city was amplified by the dirt of melting snow, and by the recognition of spatial figures (the esplanade, the market square), that evoked images of a vibrant, 'Fin de Siècle' urbanity. The Viipuri Library has recently been fully renovated on the initiative of the Alvar Aalto foundation. I have not visited it since, but cherish the memory of the power of its architecture, despite or maybe because of its state of decay.

Textured Social Scenes: Craftsmanship and Commonality in Buildings of Knowledge

III: Main Building of Helsinki University of Technology in Otaniemi (Alvar Aalto 1965-1969)

It was winter when I first arrived in Otaniemi in 1998 as a student of architecture. Red brick buildings in snow on a forested peninsula surrounded by endless ice. My legs threw long shadows in the snow, projected by the low winter sun. The entrance to the architecture school had a small canopy where some students and staff stood smoking, despite the cold. The doors were steel frames with glass, and double door handles, a high and a low one, of curved copper. The architecture department was in a low rectangular volume, one of a series that lead to the main building where the auditorium and the student restaurant were located. In between the volumes, always a half-open courtyard with snow. Inside, walls were partly covered with battens, painted white. The columns were covered with smooth white tiles, and a stair led up to the offices and the department library. The voices of students, of ourselves, discussing our projects, chatting over tasteless coffee from the machine, a small lecture room on the right where the architecture lectures were given. I recall lectures by the Danish office Vandkunsten about collective spaces, and by William Curtis, whom I admired for his capacity to establish connections between art and architecture, linking different geographies and cultures in architectural analysis.¹⁴

We would walk towards the main building, indoors, moving from volume to volume through the corridors. Passing the rooms of the engineering students, and entering the main hall. Again, the copper door handles, and double doors to keep the cold outside. The same columns, a similar stair, but larger. The curved white counter of the wardrobe, then the stair, bending upwards, to the auditorium. Leaving the classrooms, the offices, the corridors behind, we opened the big doors and entered the lecture hall. I don't recall what we learned in this room, or who spoke to us, but I learned how the light falls and bends through the curves, and how the technologically most advanced room of the University of Technology, was also the most natural one, simultaneously opaque and crystal clear, silent and moving.

It is summer when I step out of the bus again, and stand again on the open green in front of the university. The main auditorium in front of me, the lower brick volumes on my right-hand side. The courtyard's green, the field sparsely populated with some students and staff, walking towards the buildings. The landscape steps up to the main buildings in low, wide terraces. In our approaching the building, the terraces become shorter, the steps a bit higher, turning to stone. Students are sitting on the steps in small groups, eating their lunch, faces in the sun. The landscape becomes building, from field into an amphitheater, and then the building rises, the steps get steeper, stonier, grow into the roof of the auditorium and start to open, providing slits for the sunlight to get in.

IV: Virgilio Barco Public Library, Bogotá, Colombia (Rogelio Salmons 1999-2001)

The Virgilio Barco library is part of a series of big urban transformation projects that took place in Bogotá around the turn of the 21st century, in an attempt to overcome some of the serious socio-economic challenges that had haunted the South American city for decades. First, an ambitious infrastructural program was set up, the new transport system of Transmilenio providing quick bus connections which made large parts of the city accessible also for the large part of the population who could not afford private transport. Second, a number of urban neighborhoods was given new impulse by providing parks and cultural programs such as cultural centers and libraries. Thirdly, attention was given to the “furnishing” of public space. The library was one of the largest projects within the second line of initiatives. At a former building-material dump, a large park had been given shape, with the library as physical and programmatic centerpiece, and the green Andes mountain range as a backdrop.

Taking a walk around the library¹⁵

Take 1. Saturday, around noon. After heavy rain.

Character: Heka, Jack Russell, 2 years old

Heka gets out of the car and takes the first hill as a crazy rocket might, not minding the wet grass streaking her belly. Immediately, she disappears out of sight. Catalina climbs the steep hill, moving the camera upwards, (next frame: overlooking part of the park) and finds her, provoking another dog to play. A couple, probably belonging to the other dog, walk on one of the lower grounds.

Take 2. 12:45, the pond.

Characters: 6 photography students.

In the circular concrete pit below, the pond. A class of photography students tries to find the right perspective to capture the long lines, the concrete cuts in the landscape, from the pond to the library in the distance. Another focuses on the reflection of the long bamboo grass in the water. Catalina chooses the higher edge and follows the line of the bending concrete wall. Serenity of the geometrical shapes. . . broken by (or enlivened by) graffiti on all plain parts of concretes. The sounds of students talking amplified by the enclosing walls, carried over water to her spot, above.

Take 3. 13:30, the pond next to the library

Characters: Heka, library visitors.

Chasing her toy, Heka jumps around in the low water of the linear pond, shaking her skin when she gets out, splashing drops around. A repeating sequence—she moves through the water, back and forth, tireless. Passing people stop to watch, laugh, walk on. In the background, the closed brick wall of the

library, rising high up from the ground as an ancient, pre-Hispanic clay cylinder. On one side, the cylinder opens; between the wall and the water a small terrace, people drinking coffee, a glass door, people entering the library, a concrete bridge in the sky connecting the cylinder with another, lower volume, fan-shaped. Here, the same bricks, but in another pattern, opened; sounds of instruments and children's singing voices come through.

Take 4. 14:00, on the roof

Characters: guard, children, a couple.

The roof of the circular volume is made of bricks, curving brick dikes lead the eye to the mountains. A path on the roof, along the curve. A girl, about 20 years old, black and white dotted dress, takes poses at the railing. Her boyfriend makes photographs, of her, with the sunlit mountain in the background. The sound of running feet. Slowly, Catalina moves the camera from the landscape view back to the center of the circle, the middle of the roof. Children, chasing each other on the roof, to the steps of the open-air theater. A guard comes after them, tells them to slow down. She moves the lens, continues slowly, focusing again on the landscape. A full circle: enclosed space of the roof dikes, then the mountain, the couple, back inside, the children, and then landscape again.

Take 5. 15:00 The reading room.

She stands outside the reading room, before the curved glass wall. The roof-lights in the ceiling reflect in the curve, the shadows, lights and reflections play a game before her lens. Layers. The glass, the light, the people, reading, moving through space, slowly. The colors and layers fade, it all becomes one.

The descriptions of the two buildings of knowledge - a university building and a library - have been written from the user perspective, bringing to the fore the interrelationship between the social and the experiential. They seek to evoke the spatial and material manifestation of practices of the "commons": where do people meet, which place, practice and activities do they share? And what is the role of architectural details in this perspective? The University building of Aalto has been described from the point of view of a student arriving at the architecture department, using the building in daily practice in winter time, walking its corridors, sitting in its lecture rooms; and revisiting it again, later, in summer, having a more distant look, seeing the building less in terms of its daily practice but seeing it as it takes part in the landscape from which it arises. The Virgilio Barco library has been described from the perspective of a filmmaker, framing the scenes of everyday life in and around the library. The text highlights the role of activities, movements and moments in the experience of architecture, by describing different scenes outside and inside the library, first wandering through the park on a Saturday morning, then approaching the building, and eventually being on the roof and in the reading room. It shows how the library has become more than its program, more than a collection of books: it has become a social place in the city, a place to spend time, walk your dog, have an ice-cream, make photographs, lie in the grass, sit on the terrace, meet friends and, eventually, visit the library.

In both descriptions, the depicted social scenes are textured: there is a strong sense of material and texture in each of the architectural experiences. In Aalto's university, the contrast between the brick and the snow outside is the first image that comes across, while in the transition to the interior and to the auditorium, other materials and textures are introduced: the copper door handles, the curved counter, the rounded tiles on the columns. In Salmona's case, brick plays a more interactive role in the relationship between inside and outside, as the half-open brick walls at the outside of the building transmit the sounds of the indoor activities. Different patterns of brick appear in different places: the outer walls, the edges, the roof. At first sight, the use of brick in Salmona's work might be taken straight from Aalto's abundant examples, not only the university in Helsinki but most likely Aalto's own "experimental house" in Muuratsalo, Finland, where Aalto ventured into multiple brick patterns and tiles. However, even if Aalto's buildings might have been a source of inspiration, there are more locally and socially grounded explanations for Salmona's material choices. In an interview in 2007—just a year before he passed away—he stated that "in the savanna of Bogotá ... brick is a material common to the region, and its manufacture employs a great number of people. It is an economic and efficient material that has created an identity for the city."¹⁶ Salmona, learning from and working with local craftsmen, took the development of brick patterns and details as a serious part of his architectural practice.

Finally, the university building in Helsinki and the library in Bogotá lead us back to the first symbiosis proposed by Salmona: architecture and landscape. In both projects, the building is in symbiosis with the landscape: growing from it, framing it, coping with the climate and serving as a mediator between people and the world around them. Here are buildings that grow from the landscape and interact with it. Perhaps this is what Salmona meant when referring to a "terratemporal" architecture: an architecture of the earth, and of time. It was in this context that he also referred to the influence of Aalto upon his work, while simultaneously acknowledging the importance of the vernacular traditions: "I consciously try to make a "terratemporal" architecture to support myself in a tradition. This includes the great masters of architecture—Le Corbusier, Aalto, and Kahn—as well as local traditions that all have their respective presence in each project".¹⁷ From my own readings of the works of both architects, as I have tried to convey in the brief fragments above, the resonance between their works goes beyond the mere formal and material similarity. The true symbiosis of their approaches is that between humans and nature, between architecture as a social service and architecture as a response to local landscapes, climates and material traditions.

Images



Figure 1. Alvar Aalto, Viipuri City Library, Entrance hall. (Photo by author, 1998)



Figure 2. Alvar Aalto, Viipuri City Library, Staircase. (Photo by author, 1998)



Figure 3. Alvar Aalto, Viipuri City Library, Reading room. (Photo by author, 1998)

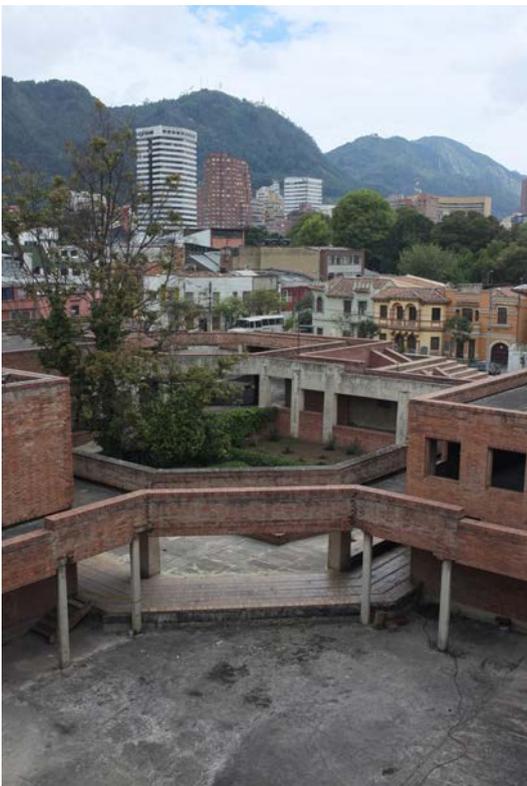


Figure 4. View of the Centro Gaitán in Bogotá, three courtyards in the diagonal axis. (Photo by author, 2015)



Figure 5. Rogelio Salmons, Centro Gaitán, crossing the building obliquely. (Photo by author, 2015)



Figure 6. Centro Gaitán, the well-maintained courtyard with the grave of Gaitán. (Photo by author, 2015)



Figure 7. Rogelio Salmons, Centro Gaitán, Detail. (Photo by author, 2015)



Figure 8. Alvar Aalto, University Campus Otaniemi, Helsinki. Landscape, stepping up to the main auditorium. (Courtesy of the Alvar Aalto Foundation)



Figure 9. Alvar Aalto, University Campus, Main auditorium, interior. (Courtesy of the Alvar Aalto Foundation)



Figure 10. Alvar Aalto, University main building, interior hall. (Courtesy of the Alvar Aalto Foundation)



Figure 11. Rogelio Salmona, Virgilio Barco Park, Bogotá, the circular pond. (Photo by Sebastiaan Veldhuisen, 2016)



Figure 12. Rogelio Salmona, Virgilio Barco Library, side of the library. (Photo by Sebastiaan Veldhuisen, 2016)



Figure 13. Rogelio Salmona, Virgilio Barco Library, roof and view of the Andes. (Photo by Sebastiaan Veldhuisen, 2016)



Figure 14. Rogelio Salmona, Virgilio Barco Library, reflections: the reading room. (Photo by Sebastiaan Veldhuisen, 2016)

Notes

- 1 Rogelio Salmona, "Between the Butterfly and the Elephant" in Mikko Heikkinen (ed.) *Elephant & Butterfly, Permanence and Chance in Architecture*. Helsinki: Alvar Aalto Academy, 2004, p. 17.
- 2 Ibidem.
- 3 Kristian Gullichsen, Preface to Peter Reed (ed.) *Alvar Aalto. Between Humanism and Materialism*, New York: The Museum of Modern Art 1998, p. 10.
- 4 The jury of the Alvar Aalto Medal 2003 consisted of Kristian Gullichsen, Harri Hautajärvi, Aimo Murtomäki, Pekka Pakkala, Peter Zumthor, and Louisa Hutton.
- 5 At the Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Bogotá and Universidad de Los Andes in Bogotá, students have reflected on the relationship between the two architects.
- 6 Kenneth Frampton, "The Legacy of Alvar Aalto: Evolution and Influence" in *Alvar Aalto. Between Humanism and Materialism*, Peter Reed (ed.), New York: The Museum of Modern Art 1998, pp. 118-140.
- 7 Kenneth Frampton, in *A+U 450 Special Feature: Rogelio Salmona*, Tokyo: A+U Publishing, 2008.
- 8 Ibid, p. 20.
- 9 See for a more extensive discussion: Klaske Havik *Urban Literacy, Reading and Writing Architecture* (Rotterdam: NAI010 publishers, 2014).
- 10 The relationship between the composition of the building and the role of memory was explored in the master's thesis of Mauricio Salazar Valenzuela, *Lugarers dentro de lugares. El rito de la Memoria en la composición arquitectónica. Cultural Center Jorge Eliécer Gaitán: Rogelio Salmona*. Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Bogotá, 2012.
- 11 Bernard Tschumi, "Advertisements for Architecture" / "Architecture and Transgression", in Bernard Tschumi, *Architecture and Disjunction* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press 1996) pp. 64, 73.
- 12 Ricardo L. Castro, *Rogelio Salmona*, Bogotá: Villegas Editoriales 1998, p. 18.
- 13 Gernot Böhme *Atmosphere as Mindful Physical Presence in Space*, in Klaske Havik, Gus Tielens et. al. OASE#91 Building Atmosphere with Peter Zumthor and Juhani Pallasmaa, Rotterdam: nai010, 2013, pp. 21-32.
- 14 Lectures in Otaniemi, Spring 1998. Curtis was also present in Jyväskylä at the event in 2003 in which Salmona received his Aalto medal. There, Curtis made a heartfelt address to all the international architects present, to engage politically and to take responsibility for our changing society.
- 15 Written after two subsequent visits to the building in October 2015 and April 2016 (and previous visits to many of Salmona's works in Colombia). Character inspired by filmmaker Catalina Maria Sandoval and her dog Heka.

- 16 Ken Tadashi Oshima and Oscar Arenales-Vergara, *Interview with Rogelio Salmona, April 2007, Bogotá, Colombia*. in *A+U 450 Special Feature: Rogelio Salmona*, Tokyo: A+U Publishing, 2008, p. 14.
- 17 Ken Tadashi Oshima and Oscar Arenales-Vergara, *Interview with Rogelio Salmona, April 2007, Bogotá, Colombia*. in *A+U 450 Special Feature: Rogelio Salmona*, Tokyo: A+U Publishing, 2008, p. 13.

About the Author

Dr. Klaske Havik is Associate Professor of Architecture, at Delft University of Technology and Visiting Professor of Architecture in Tampere, Finland. Her work relates architectural and urban questions to literary language. Her book *Urban Literacy: Reading and Writing Architecture* (2014) proposes a literary approach to architecture and urbanism. Other publications include the edited volumes *Writingplace: Investigations in Architecture and Literature* (2016) and *Architectural Positions: Architecture, Modernity and the Public Sphere* (2009). As editor of architecture journal OASE, she published issues such as OASE#98 *Narrating Urban Landscapes*, OASE#91 *Building Atmosphere* (2013), and OASE#70 *Architecture and Literature* (2007). Havik's literary work has appeared in Dutch poetry collections and literary magazines.

Presenting the Extremely Difficult Past: Günther Domenig's Documentation Center of the National Socialist Party Rally Grounds, Nuremberg, Germany

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Abstract

Buildings have a way of bringing the past into the present. This is important because experiences of the past often constitute impactful moments in everyday lives and allow a contemplation of existential meaning. It is an aspect often neglected by architectural professionals and critics because it lies outside the Vitruvian triad of aesthetic, functional, and structural virtues. It goes without saying that a building's presentation of the past is ontological. In other words, individual perceptions of a building are subjective, and the building's objective traits or histories do not guarantee that it will turn into a place of memory for everybody. The question then is: How can architectural design assist in making the past present in meaningful ways when applied to pre-existing buildings that carry particularly notable and troubling pasts? In order to address this question, I will investigate the Documentation Center Nazi Party Rally Grounds, in Nuremberg, Germany, designed by the Austrian architect Günther Domenig, who thrust a stake of steel and glass diagonally through the block. I will first provide a brief historical background, including why Nuremberg became the Party Rally location and how postwar memory culture and politics had evolved in Germany in general and in Nuremberg in particular. I will then present an analysis of Domenig's design,

through on-site investigation and archival study at the Architecture Center, Vienna, which now houses materials from Domenig's office. In organizing this section, I will apply the framework concerning how a piece of architecture brings the past into the present – by designation, formal characteristics, physical traces, and memento.

Introduction: Architecture as a Place of Memory

Buildings have a way of bringing the past into the present. This is important because experiences of the past often constitute impactful moments in everyday lives and allow a contemplation of existential meaning, as discussed by philosophers and historians such as Pierre Nora, Paul Ricoeur, David Lowenthal, David Carr, and Edward Casey.¹ It is an aspect often neglected by architectural professionals and critics because it lies outside the Vitruvian triad of aesthetic, functional, and structural virtues, which have served as the intellectual baseline of the discipline for over two millennia. The memory-inducing mechanisms of buildings can vary, among which the following are notable:² First, a building may commemorate a particular event or individual by being *designated* as a memorial. For example, at the Jefferson Memorial in Washington, D.C., visitors recall what they learned in a history lesson and read an excerpt from the Declaration of Independence. Secondly, a building may refer to the time of its origin by its *formal characteristics*, carrying a certain style. On the National Mall, people are shown the pasts near and far by the contrast between the National Gallery's East and West Buildings. Thirdly, a building may recall an otherwise neglected past by bearing *physical traces*, just like the palimpsest, on the surface of which an old writing, once washed off, has resurfaced.³ At the southwest corner of the East Building, astute observers would have noticed an erosion of Tennessee Marble and determined it to be a result of past visitors' repeated brushing against the stone's sharp edge. Water leakage was discovered in the building in 2005, and for a remedy, all the marble slabs were removed from the building's surface, resurfaced, and reinstalled. Only a couple of months into the re-opening of the East Building of September 30, 2016, however, the stain was once again visible at the same location.⁴ And lastly, a physical place may also serve as a *memento* simply because an event took place there, even when there is no deliberate designation, formal characteristics, or material trace.⁵ A family may remind each other of their previous visit to the nation's capital, standing at the same spot on the Mall as before to purchase ice-cream bars from a food truck. It goes without saying that a building's presentation of the past is ontological. In other words, individual perceptions of a building are subjective, and the building's objective traits or histories do not guarantee that the building turns into a place of memory for everybody. The question then is: How can architectural design assist in making the past present

in meaningful ways when applied to pre-existing buildings that carry particularly notable and troubling pasts? To address this question, I will investigate the Documentation Center Nazi Party Rally Grounds, or *Dokumentationszentrum Reichsparteitagsgelände*, in Nuremberg, Germany.

The Documentation Center in question is located a couple of miles outside Nuremberg's old, albeit reconstructed city wall, on the former Nazi Party Rally Grounds.⁶ Albert Speer designed the overall site plan for the stretch of 25 square kilometers as well as several buildings on the Grounds. The Congress Hall, however, a portion of which the Center reuses, was by Ludwig Ruff, a Nuremberg architect and professor of the city's art craft school and a Nazi member since February 1, 1933, and, after his death in 1934, by his son Franz Ruff.⁷ Modeled after the Roman Coliseum, but in a U-shape instead of an oval, the Hall was to consist of an auditorium for 50,000 people and two orthogonal blocks terminating the ends of the U. The construction began in 1935 with the intended completion year of 1943, and the roof structure over the auditorium was still being designed in 1938-1940. The work was interrupted in 1939 when Hitler invaded Poland, then restarted and proceeded between 1940 and 1941, but was abandoned at the end of the War.⁸ The area for the auditorium, surrounded by the U-shaped building, was left without a roof. The two end blocks were missing their topmost floor, and the space between them, intended for the main entrance hall, remained void. While the outer surface of the building and the U-shaped colonnade were finished with polychrome marble, the rest was for the most part unfinished, with exposed bricks for the walls and concrete for the floor and ceiling. Still, 275 meters wide, 265 meters deep, and 40 meters tall, it was the "largest preserved monumental building from the Nazi era in Germany."⁹ In 1998 an invitational competition was held to turn the upper floor of the northern end block into a documentation center, with the explicit purposes of serving as "a permanent establishment to the numerous visitors, who come to the site all year round and expect a comprehensive education about its history" and of presenting the "emergence, manifestations, and consequences of National Socialism."¹⁰ The Austrian architect Günther Domenig (1934-2012) won the first prize with a design to thrust a "*Pfahl*," a stake of steel and glass diagonally through the block.¹¹ Visitors enter the building at one end of the stake, meander through the orthogonal building through the "Fascination and Terror" exhibit, re-connect with the spear which jets out over the vast exterior court, and return to the entrance foyer through the stake. The Center, opened on November 4, 2001, has 1,300 square meters of exhibition space and 450 square meters of the "International Learning Center" for films, lectures, and seminars.

For many reasons the architecture of the Documentation Center is ideal for the question being posed. First, the design has been applied to a pre-existing building at which significant historical events took place. In this sense, the Documentation Center differs from, for example, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C., which, although a memorial by designation, stands on a location with no relation to the past that it memorializes. Second, remembering the Nazi past is not just worthwhile, but a civic duty. Third, the Center addresses an *extremely difficult* past. While it is very challenging and painful to recall an experience in which one was the victim, I use the term *extremely difficult*

to mean the past in which one was, or the people one closely associates with were, the perpetrator(s). In this sense, this institution is different from other Holocaust-related documentation centers in Germany and elsewhere, at which the visitors' focus is as much on the victims as on the perpetrators.¹² It took half a century after the War for the City of Nuremberg to establish a board of trustees for a new documentation center that would constantly remind its citizens of their *extremely difficult* past. Willful forgetfulness and self-victimization were prevalent during the 1950s and 60s. During the 1970s, fearing that preserving the building as a historical relic would promote neo-Nazism, they used and proposed to use it for mundane purposes. Finally, toward the end of the 1980s, recognition emerged that a building could be a means to transmit the lessons of the past to the future. Additionally, the architect's personal background makes this case important. Domenig struggled with his own anti-Semitism: His father was a party member killed by the resistance, and as a young man, he had a hard time reconciling with the fact that many important architects were Jewish.¹³

My research question is applicable not only to buildings associated with Nazism and the Holocaust, but also to debates in memory, culture, and politics in general. A typical reaction in Germany and elsewhere, when confronted with artifacts carrying both difficult and extremely difficult pasts, is to destroy the artifact. The most striking recent example in the United States was the popular decision to take down the Confederate flag in Columbia, South Carolina. Another reaction is to resort to forgetfulness, witting or unwitting. To many visitors, Fort Robinson in Nebraska is just a friendly state park, but many forget that it was the site of the 1879 massacre of the Cheyenne people by the U.S. Army. In Washington, D.C., any reference to the founding fathers' personal slaves is absent at the Jefferson Memorial. The problem is that obliterating the artifact or their associations with the past does not eradicate the past itself and instead removes the artifact's ability to remind us of the past and our chance to confront and understand it. Conversely, preserving artifacts alone does not yield productive discussion unless accompanied by a clear indication that keeping them does not affirm the past actions. Recent debates surrounding the Confederate statues on Monument Avenue in Richmond, Virginia, are perfect examples of a city struggling with these issues. At a symposium held at the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study in March of 2017, Hilary Beckles of the University of West Indies quoted one of the judges of the Nuremberg Trials: "We are walking into the desert, and somewhere out there is water. Let us go and find it."¹⁴ Beckles used the passage to characterize the complexity of the issues involving universities' past relations to slavery, but, at the same time, was warning against paralysis and indecision. Despite, or rather because of, its extreme difficulty, keeping such a past in the present and carrying it to the future is a social responsibility. My research will contribute to the ways architectural design can participate in this effort.

In this article, I will first provide a brief historical background, including why Nuremberg became the Party Rally location and how postwar memory culture and politics had evolved in Germany in general and in Nuremberg in particular. The overview will help us understand how extremely difficult this particular past had been to the City of Nuremberg and its citizens. I will then present an analysis of Domenig's

design through on-site investigation and archival study at the Architecture Center, Vienna, which houses materials from Domenig's office.¹⁵ In organizing this section, I will apply the above framework concerning how a piece of architecture brings the past into the present – by designation, formal characteristics, physical traces, and memento.

Nuremberg and the Nazi Party Rallies

The City of Nuremberg's tie to the Nazi past is at least four-fold. First, it held the *Reichsparteitage*, meaning literally the Empire's party days but translated usually as the Nazi Party Rallies. Secondly, the Race Laws, later known as the Nuremberg Laws, were announced there in 1935 during the Party Rally. Thirdly, the propaganda newspaper *Der Stürmer* [Stormtrooper] was published there by Julius Streicher (1885-1946), a former schoolteacher and one of the earliest to join the Party, who led the Party's Franconian division. And fourthly, during 1945-1946 major Nazis responsible for the Holocaust were tried there at the so-called Nuremberg Trials. Among these past ties of Nuremberg to Nazism, that to the *Reichsparteitage* would be the most difficult for the citizens because of their direct involvement in human crimes. The Rally was held for the first time in 1923 in Munich, but moved to Nuremberg, then in 1926 was held in Weimar, and in 1927 and 1929 in Nuremberg. When Hitler became Chancellor in 1933 the rally became an annual event in Nuremberg until its cancellation in 1939. The primary purposes were to stir National Socialism and anti-Semitism among the German people and to demonstrate power both nationally and internationally. Up to one hundred thousand soldiers marched through the city, and a growing number of onlookers, reaching nearly a million, cheered and gave the Nazi salute.

Nuremberg was chosen for the Party Rallies for a number of reasons: The city was fairly centrally located; A large park called Luitpoldhain was available for congregation; The Party could rely on its well-organized Franconian branch led by Streicher; and the police were highly sympathetic to the Party. The selection also was subsequently justified by the Party in relation to the notion of the Third Reich. The Nazis adopted the term to legitimize themselves in the historical lineage of the Holy Roman Empire (962-1806) and the German Empire (1871-1918). Nuremberg fit into this scheme, having been one of the places of the medieval Imperial Diet. Playing on the linguistic similarity, the Nazis highlighted Nuremberg's transformation from the city of the *Reichstag* to that of the *Reichsparteitage des deutschen Volkes*.¹⁶

The Rally involved the entire city, physically and socially. The procession started from the Castle at the hilltop at the northern edge of the walled city where the *Reichstag* had met. It then descended on the sloped *Burgstraße* toward the river *Pegnitz*, passing St. Sebald church, and the *Rathaus*. It came to the *Hauptmarkt*, then called Adolf Hitler Square, where *Frauen Kirche* stands, the place of worship for the Holy Roman Emperors. After crossing the river on *Königstraße*, and climbing upward, it passed *Lorenz-*

kirche and reached the *Frauentorturm* at the southern end of the walled city in front of the *Hauptbahnhof*. From there it continued southward on *Allersberger Straße*, which now is traced by tourists on a tram. The crowd's enthusiastic reactions were captured in numerous photographs and films, regarding which Hermann Glaser, influential social historian and Nuremberg's culture minister since 1964, retrospectively noted: "Eternal jubilation of the Franconians met the *Führer* when he appeared on Adolf Hitler Square. There was a storm of enthusiasm which subsided only after quite a while.' The overwhelming majority of the women and men of Nuremberg could have avoided this event without any danger of retaliation. Instead, they applauded these national criminals."¹⁷

Evolving Memory Culture and Politics

Nuremberg's citizens and their leaders went through a number of ideological, political, and moral stances regarding the colossal material evidence of the City's involvement in the genocide. Denial of the past and willful forgetfulness were prevalent during the 1950s and '60s which manifested in a number of different forms: changing in the building's name; shifting the focus to a different past, and proposing destruction of the building. They portrayed themselves as innocent victims, expounding that Nazism had come from outside Nuremberg and that the City was a casualty of allied bombing. At the same time, the City's medieval and Renaissance pasts were promoted. The Castle and Albrecht Dürer House, destroyed during the war and newly reconstructed, were elevated to the level of exemplary built heritage. Once the former Congress Hall building became the City property, it was renamed the Round Exhibition Building to sever the ties with the Nazi past. When the City held the German Building Exhibition in 1949, the express intention was to promote "the rehabilitation of the reputation of the City of Nuremberg," which "has suffered considerably ... because of the political events of the past years." A restaurant was set up to offer a panoramic view of the courtyard. Other shows included the 900 years of Nuremberg exhibit in 1950 and a restaurant exhibition in 1951. In 1963, the Association of German Architects proposed the demolition of the building, for the reason that it "remains a contravention of the spirit of the new city. ... We have the responsibility to erase this sign and to sacrifice it."

There also were attempts at adapting the building to other mundane purposes. Already in the 1950s the City administration attempted economic exploitation. Ideas included a football stadium (1955) and an event hall with a covered courtyard (1958), both of which were not pursued due to the prohibitive cost or the infeasible structure. However, the notion that trivial use would suppress the monumental power of Nazi architecture drew philosophical support from Hannah Arendt's "Report on the Banality of Evil," originally published in a series of five installments in *The New Yorker* in 1963.¹⁸ During the 1970s and '80s,

Herman Glaser promoted a profanation of Nazi buildings. The U-shaped building was used as a storage facility with annual rental income to the City. The *Nürnberger Symphoniker* gained a practice room and a recording studio in the southern end block, and a private recording company also rented space. Since 1986, the courtyard within the southern block was turned into the *Serenadenhof*, an open-air music venue. Other proposals included a drive-in cinema or a home for the elderly, which were not realized.

Meanwhile, a new perspective was emerging. On November 9, 1959, in Wiesbaden, in a lecture addressing school teachers, Theodor W. Adorno rejected the contemporary catchphrase “working through the past” as misleading, observing that “its intention is to close the books on the past and, if possible, even remove it from memory,” and arguing that “the attitude that everything should be forgotten and forgiven” would be appropriate “for those who suffered injustice” but “is practiced by those party supporters who committed the injustice.”¹⁹ Adorno instead promoted the kind of critical self-reflection, which Freudian theory called for in order to come to terms with the past. Influenced by this Frankfurt School thinker, the mid-1970s saw an emergence of interest in the central role architecture played in Nazism. With the increasing willingness to confront Nazi crimes, the *Reichsparteitagsgelände* were listed under the Bavarian State Historic Preservation Law in 1973. In 1985 an exhibition entitled “Fascination and Violence” was installed in the Zeppelin Stand building designed by Albert Speer. There were some constraints: The exhibit was open only during summer months because the building was not heated, and it was not easily accessible because it was located at the furthest end of the former Rally Grounds. Still, the number of visitors to the exhibit climbed to 35,000, including many youths who did not have a personal memory of Nazism and the Holocaust. And yet the idea of preserving the building was still highly controversial, with a fear that it would promote and support the Neo-Nazis.

A turning point came in 1987 when Nuremberg’s businessmen proposed to convert the former Congress Hall into a leisure center. Strong oppositions were raised, among which was that of Michael Petzet, Conservator General of the Bavarian Conservation Department in Munich, a branch of the National Office for the Preservation of Monuments.²⁰ Petzet wrote to the City administration that the building was the “most important testimony of the gigantomania of National Socialism” and should be left unused, differentiating the *Mahnmal*, a critical statement about or a warning from the past, from the *Denkmal*, a mere reminder, or *Ehrenmal*, which honors someone or something from the past.²¹ The *Vereinigung der Verfolgten des Naziregimes* [Association of Persecutees of the Nazi Regime] also protested against the proposal, drawing attention to the exploitation of concentration camp prisoners as forced laborers at the site. Some Nuremberg citizens, welcoming the state office’s position, offered a counterproposal of leaving the courtyard to a planned decay, which they said would take care of its criminal world of thought. According to their idea, a small pavilion in the space between the two end blocks would inform visitors of the Nazi period and the history of the Nazi Party Rally Grounds, and a path in the center of the courtyard fenced with barbed-wire would symbolically exclude National Socialism from their lives.

A resolution to face the artifact of the Nazi past head on finally arrived. With a solid consensus formed among those involved by the mid-1990s, a board of trustees was established for a new documentation center in 1997, and on August 3, 1998, the City announced an invitational architectural competition for the *Dokumentationszentrum Reichspartitagsgelände*, to be housed in the uppermost floor of the northern end block.²² The Center was to become the first step towards an overall concept for the future use of the former Nazi Party Rally Grounds. Having run the exhibit in the Zeppelin Stand building, the City expected 100,000 annual visitors.²³ Middle Bavarian and Federal Governments joined the City to fund the project; so did private sponsors and cultural foundations. Eight teams of architects were invited to the competition; three from Nuremberg and its environs and four from other German cities.²⁴ Domenig from Graz, Austria, was the only one from outside Germany. The deadline was October 23, and the jury met on November 11. The first prize went to Domenig, the second to Johannes Hölzinger of Bad Nauheim, Germany, and honorable mention to Volker Staab of Berlin and Frese & Kleindienst of Nuremberg.²⁵

Even after the competition, the City's leaders engaged in debate concerning how best to create a place of memory. On November 13 and 14, 1999, the Nuremberg City Museums held an international symposium titled "Future of the Past: How Should the History of the Third Reich be Transmitted in the 21st Century?" at the *Deutsch-Amerikanischen Institut*.²⁶ Invited speakers represented various Holocaust-related museums including the U.S. Holocaust Memorial and Museum, which had opened in 1993. At this occasion, Franz Sonnenberger, Director of Nuremberg's City Museums since 1994, spoke, looking back at the City's attempts to deal with the built relics of the Nazi past. The resolve and determination of those involved in the project to confront the past through the construction of the Documentation Center is clear in his statement: "the historical burden of the former Reich Party Congress site is perhaps a unique opportunity. Where else would there be a comparable possibility of throwing critical light on the façade of the Third Reich, thereby giving the lie to new myths and legends? Where else would it be possible to analyse the 'motivation machinery' of National Socialism?"²⁷

At the time of the competition, the City expected to have the construction completed by the fall of 2000, in time for the City's 950th anniversary. However, construction was delayed. The topping ceremony instead was held on November 15, 2000, and the building was opened a year later, on November 4, 2001. The permanent exhibit titled "Fascination and Terror" presents such themes as the rise of the National Socialist Party, mass myths and the *Führer* cult, Nuremberg as the city of the annual National Socialist Party Rally, the propaganda and reality of the Party, World War II and the Holocaust, and the Nuremberg Trials after 1945.

Architectural Design for a Place of Memory

The following section offers an analysis of Domenig's design, addressing the question of how architectural design can assist in making the past be present in meaningful ways when applied to a pre-existing building that carries a particularly notable and troubling past. One of the four categories that I stated in the beginning, that is, the designation of the former Congress Hall as a Documentation Center, had already been made by the City prior to the architect's involvement in the project. I will, therefore, focus on the other three categories – formal characteristics, physical traces, and memento.

Formal Characteristics

The most striking and pronounced aspect of Domenig's design for the Documentation Center, acknowledged both by the architect himself and by the community leaders involved in the project, is the *Pfahl*, or stake, of glass and steel, which cuts diagonally through the orthogonally organized massive pre-existing building of stone, bricks, and concrete. Domenig explained the *Pfahl* in his speech at the building's opening ceremony: "A 'stake' cuts the right-angled geometry of the north wing. It begins across from the Bayern Street, penetrates diagonally spatially the building, and floats in the void space of the inner courtyard of the congress hall. This "pile" is formed into the longitudinal and vertical main access of all intended functional areas."²⁸ In explaining this design element at the topping ceremony, Domenig recalled his first visit to the former Congress Hall.²⁹ The building tour took place on September 16, 1998, as a part of a colloquium offered by the City of Nuremberg to the invited competitors.³⁰ Domenig stated, "During the visit, icy coldness came over me. The dust of the dead in the interior spaces and the architectural translation of the power - there were only right angles and axes." To destroy this power, his idea was to drive a stake into the building. Others also acknowledged the new "surgical incision" of steel and glass in Deconstructivist style contrasting against the monumentality of the Nazi propaganda architecture of marble, bricks, and concrete based on right angles and bilateral symmetry.³¹

Visitors to the Documentation Center are presented the Nazi past via the stark contrast in forms and materials to Domenig's new insertion. The clash of the two is presented in a number of strategic locations. From afar, the end of the stake thrusts out of the massive polychrome marble building works as an unequivocal marker for the entrance. Visitors climb up the steel steps, passing through the opening made into the heavy wall of marble and brick, arriving at the entrance hall. The study center's auditorium hovers above the space, with its underside composed of diagonal planes. The main stairs and the elevator, of steel and glass, running parallel to the stake, lead visitors up to the room for an introductory video. After going through a couple of orthogonal exhibit rooms, visitors arrive at the upper part of the stake,

which forms a lookout to the front street on one side and to the entrance hall on the other. The floor here is of frost glass, making clear the notion of incision. After going through another set of exhibition rooms, visitors now cross a bridge over the space located on the central axis of the old orthogonal block, which was to become a secondary entrance to the Congress Hall and the only space whose interior finish of polychrome marble was completed during the Nazi era. Given the limited size of the pre-existing space, Domenig could not have set up the bridge diagonally on the floor plan. Instead, he presented an incline downward to the middle point of the bridge's span, creating the diagonal section-wise. At the end of the exhibit sequence, visitors come out to the stake at its other end, which provides a balcony overlooking the courtyard. Visitors then return to the entrance hall walking through the stake, descending the full height of a floor. The City Museums characterized this descent as a kind of "lock from the past to the present," referring by the "lock" to the device that controls the flow of water in a canal.³²

Physical Traces

Architectural and local journalism commenting on Domenig's design and its execution mostly focused on the formal and material contrast between the pre-existing building and the new insertion. An actual visit to the Documentation Center, however, is endowed with a much richer architectural experience. This has been a consequence of a number of architectural design decisions, many of which were made during the construction phase, and which were motivated by the decision the City had made earlier to keep the Nazi building in the raw state it was left in at the end of the War. These design decisions contributed greatly in bringing the extremely difficult past to the present in meaningful ways. The City's decision to leave the building's pre-existing condition was partly for financial reasons, but, more importantly, had been based on the desire to treat the building as an exhibit in its own right. Presenting the building as a physical trace of the Nazis' actions and showing its incomplete state meant for the City to present to visitors its resolute commitment not to allow fulfillment of the Nazis' intentions. Sonnenberger, at the occasion of the building's opening, shared his reading of the unfinished interior wall of bare bricks as the banality behind the intended grandeur of Nazi architecture.³³

Accepting the City officials' charge to treat the unfinished building as a piece of the exhibit, Domenig stated, "This task is exceptional. The exhibition ... is a 'remembrance memorial' in the truest sense of the words," and he resolved to leaving intact the building in which "There is nothing, however small... that does not demonstrate this frightening ideology."³⁴ He kept the walls and ceilings as they had existed before him, stating that "The existing rooms, their walls and ceilings, are largely preserved in their raw concrete or brick surface structure."³⁵ As a result, the walls are not only in bare bricks but also with irregular protrusions wherever the original design called for an additional wall, which was planned but

never constructed. The exhibition panels were to be detached from the wall surface so that the bare surface of the wall was left without cover. And the ceilings were also left in the state of bare concrete slabs with sharp pointed metal still exposed.

When it came to the floor, however, the rough surface of the pre-existing concrete slabs needed to be finished for the sake of visitors' safety. For this, Domenig simply stated, "The existing bare floors are provided with industrial floor coverings (sealed concrete screeds)."³⁶ While Domenig's text does not go any further on this topic, the site-inspection and the archival search have revealed an explicitly intentional strategy. A metal piece was inserted at every edge where the horizontal plane of the floor meets with the vertical planes of the existing wall or column, prior to pouring the floor finish. As a result, the newly applied smooth floor materials never touch the rough vertical surfaces, and the thickness of the newly added floor finish is clearly visible to the visitors. This strategic detail design is specified in a drawing, now in the Domenig Archive, titled "Screed Finishing Profile," and drawn by Gerhard Wallner of Domenig's office on January 19, 2000, during the construction phase (Figure 1). According to this drawing, the rough surface of the existing floor was first leveled with mortar 40 mm thick, on top of which insulation 40 mm thick, foil, and heated flooring 70 mm thick were applied before the surface was treated. To be noted for the present discussion is the treatment of the borders of the floor finish. The drawing shows a bent metal piece of either steel or aluminum of 120 mm height and 60 mm width, which was fixed to the pre-existing floor before the mortar was laid, so that it kept the insulation and the heated floor finish away from the pre-existing wall, with a gap of 60 mm wide and 60 mm deep along the perimeter of the floor (Figure 2).

Keeping new elements away from the existing fabric of the Congress Hall seems a strategy applied by Domenig throughout this project. In addition to the floor finish and the exhibition panels that are detached from the wall, the *Pfahl*, or the stake, discussed earlier in relation to the formal and material contrast, also was kept away from the existing wall as it ran through the building. Also detached from the pre-existing fabric of stones and bricks are the newly constructed stairs of steel in the entrance hall, running parallel to the stake, and the bridge. While the prohibition to touch may have created the sense of reverence in some other buildings, in the design of the Documentation Center, it clearly generated repugnance and aversion to the pre-existing building. In so doing, Domenig succeeded in demonstrating to the visitor the position his building takes in confrontation against the Nazi building, and ultimately the contemporary Nuremberg citizens' stance to condemn the Nazi past.

Installing the *Pfahl*, stairs, or bridge meant cutting through the pre-existing walls and floors. There also were additional places where walls had to be cut, in order to open a window or to allow access from one exhibition space to another. A set of floor plans and sections, now at the Domenig Archive, shows where the walls and floor slabs were to be cut. To execute what is specified in these drawings, a circular saw was used (Figure 3). This was a significantly challenging task, as described by Walter Anderle, Nuremberg's City Master Planner, at the building's opening ceremony: "The existing building materials - hard bricks and high-quality concrete - offered an unexpectedly great resistance to demolition work." "...the

construction work was faced with the most difficult tasks. 2 m thick masonry work had to be cut through in different places. With diagonal penetrations, this increased to 5 m.”³⁷ Throughout the Center, the cuts made by the circular saw are dramatically presented to the visitor (Figure 4). The architect made sure that the sections of the granite, bricks, and mortar were left just as they were when the saw was used on them, without adding any finish or even polish. Consequently, the visitor is confronted with the physical traces of the Documentation Center’s actions against the Congress Hall, from the moment they enter the building and throughout.

The architectural design of the Documentation Center takes advantage of the physical trace. It takes the pre-existing building as the physical trace of Nazis’ actions. And in turn it leaves physical trace of its own actions against the Nazi building. In so doing, the design has become an agent of countering the Nazi past.

Memento

The memento by definition requires that the person who experienced the past event in person recall it. The Documentation Center presented a difficulty as those who experienced the Congress Hall during the Nazi era were aging or had passed away. In order to fulfill its mission, the Documentation Center had to establish itself as a memory place for the younger generations who do not have personal experiences of the Nazi past. In order to turn the former Congress Hall into a place of quasi-memento, they turned to oral history. In April 1998, four months before the competition was first announced, Gregor Schöllgen, Professor of Modern History at the University of Erlangen, and author of a report for the permanent exhibition in a new setting, published a piece in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*.³⁸ He shared that “many witnesses agreed to talk about their experiences” of the Nazi rallies. The last segment of the Center’s exhibit shows videos of elderly women recollecting their experiences of the Rally days, in which they competed with each other on how many times they managed to have glimpses of the *Führer*. In another video, an elderly man demonstrates a military salute, using his umbrella for a gun. Some other exhibits, too, intend to make the past experiences transferable, with the use of large-size photographs and cut-out exhibits in the middle of the space devoted to Wehrmacht soldiers.

Architectural design also worked in the area of memento. In the space near the end of the sequence of exhibits, where the exhibit’s narrative depicts the height of the horror of the War and the Holocaust, the strategy of detaching the new construction away from the pre-existing is at work, turning the exhibit floor into a sort of a bridge, detached both from the floor and the walls of the Congress Hall. But what Domenig did in addition allows the architecture, the old and the new together, to give a warning to the future. In the existing building, a three-dimensional horizontal layering of bricks was to be observed, with

bricks protruding and receding significantly from one layer to the other. The documents attached to the competition program in fact included a black-and-white photograph of this space (Figure 5). Taking a hint from this, Domenig took advantage of the experiential effect of this wall detail. The corner of the brick wall was pronounced, hinting that around the corner a space exists. When the visitor reaches the corner, the exhibit shows a full height floor-to-ceiling photograph depicting a horrific and devastating scene from the war. Using the strategies of physical trace as well as memento, the architecture makes a statement that the danger of repeating the same grave error is just around the corner (Figure 6).

Conclusion

Nuremberg's Documentation Center, tasked to show the causes and connections of the "criminal power exercise" of the Nazi state and to display its "violent consequences,"³⁹ stands at a point in time, being a fruit of the decades of the struggles and efforts against the extremely challenging past, and the will to effectuate that past toward the future.

Domenig commended the city of Nuremberg for having a clearly defined task of showing the more profound connections through exhibit, media, and training, and hoped that he was able to express these requirements architecturally. He intended for the overall structure to become an extremely powerful and impressive experience. He tasked himself and all to realize the goal consistently and incorruptibly. He, in his professional capacity, has tackled the task by inflicting wounds to the Nazi building, avoiding the touch, and creating a space of unease and foreboding: "It is satisfactory for me - through my creative potency and profession - to respond to this historical tragedy with hope." "I hope that I have succeeded in expressing these requirements architecturally."⁴⁰



Figure 3. The circular saw used to cut the pre-existing brick and stone walls. (Dokumentationszentrum Reichsparteitagsgelände, no. 1159-25)



Figure 4. The trace of the circular saw visible in the gallery, Documentation Center Nazi Party Rally Grounds, 2017. (Photo by author)



Figure 5. The former Congress Hall, Nuremberg, interior. Photograph provided by the Nuremberg City Museums at the time of the competition, 1998, taken in 1997. (Dokumentationszentrum Reichsparteitagsgelände, no. 0275-02)



Figure 6. The Documentation Center Nazi Party Rally Grounds, interior. Space between Galleries 17 and 18, 2017. (Photo by author)

Notes

- 1 Pierre Nora, "Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire," *Representations*, no. 26 (1989): 7–24; Paul Ricoeur, *Memory, History, Forgetting* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004); David Lowenthal, *The Past Is a Foreign Country* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985); David Carr, *Experience and History: Phenomenological Perspectives on the Historical World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014); and Edward S. Casey, *Remembering: A Phenomenological Study*, Second edition, Studies in Continental Thought (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2000).
- 2 The deliberate designation, formal characteristics, and physical trace identified here are parallel to Charles Sanders Peirce's categorization of signs – that which stands for something for somebody – into symbol, icon, and index.
- 3 Author.
- 4 "National Gallery of Art Reopens Newly Renovated and Expanded East Building," accessed July 29, 2017, <https://www.nga.gov/content/ngaweb/press/2016/eastbuilding.html>.
- 5 For the discussion on memento, refer to Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method* (New York: Crossroad, 1989).
- 6 After the allied bombing destroyed much of the city, the old fabric was reconstructed, taking four decades. See: "Nuremberg Rebuilt – City at the Crossroads," *New York Times* (April 8, 1984) NYTimes.com, accessed July 27, 2017, <http://www.nytimes.com/1984/04/08/travel/nuremberg-rebuilt-city-at-the-crossroads.html?pagewanted=all>.
- 7 Alexander Schmidt, *Geländebegehung : das Reichsparteitagsgelände in Nürnberg* (Nürnberg: Sandberg Verlag, 2002), 177.
- 8 Schmidt, *Geländebegehung*, 48. See also: Nuremberg City Museums, "Dokumentationszentrum Reichsparteitagsgelände," pamphlet (November 4, 2001); and H.-W. Lübbecke, Chief Conservator of Bayern state office for the preservation of monuments, Munich, an attachment (WU14) to "Eingeladener Realisierungswettbewerb Dokumentationszentrum Reichsparteitagsgelände Nürnberg, Anslober: Stadt Nürnberg, Tag der Ansloberung: 03.08.1998," [Invitational realization competition Documentation Center Nazi Party Rally Grounds Nuremberg, Issuer: The City of Nuremberg, Day of Issue: August 3, 1998] (competition program hereafter), Architekturzentrum Wien (Az-W hereafter).
- 9 Museen der Stadt Nürnberg, „Neues Zeichen – Die Architektur des Dokumentationszentrums Reichsparteitagsgelände,“ news release (November 15, 2000), Az-W.
- 10 Competition program.
- 11 The pun of Speer and spear, which works in English, is from: Steven Erlanger, "Nuremberg Journal; The Architect Who Speared His Own Nazi Demon," *The New York Times*, November 8, 2001, <http://www.nytimes.com/2001/11/08/world/nuremberg-journal-the-architect-who-speared-his-own-nazi-demon.html>.
- 12 This was acknowledged at the building's opening: "In contrast to concentration camps or Gestapo prisons, the Nazi party rally grounds were not a place of physical violence, but instead, it deciphers the 'motivation machinery' of the National Socialism that made it possible. Therefore it is important not only to deal with the structural remains pragmatically. They must

be linked to a historical assessment and the clear position of our democratic community.” See, Nuremberg City Museums, “*Dokumentationszentrum Reichsparteitagsgelände*,” section titled “*Kulissen der Gewalt*” [Scenes of Violence].

- 13 Günther Domenig, presentation script (November 15, 2000), Az-W.
- 14 Conference “University and Slavery: Bound by History,” held on March 3, 2017, at the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study.
- 15 At Domenig’s death of 2012, the office was succeeded by Gerhard Wallner, who had studied under Domenig at the Technical University in Graz, and had been working at Domenig since 1987. He directed the office from 1990 to 2000. In 2005 Wallner became CEO of the office of Architekten Domenig & Wallner. Wallner in fact had a heavy hand during the execution of the Documentation Center building. Many correspondences between the architect’s office and on-site contractors bear his name.
- 16 An exhibition titled “Stadt der Reichsparteitage” [The City of the Nazi Party Rally] was held on September 8-30, 1937, at the Germanic National Museum of Nuremberg, organized by the *Amt Schrifttumspflege bei dem Beauftragten des Führers für die Überwachung der gesamten geistigen und weltanschaulichen Erziehung der NSDAP* (Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei), or the Office of the Führer’s representative for the supervision of the entire spiritual and ideological education of the or National Socialist German Workers’ Party. The poster announcing this exhibit highlighted the city’s transformation from that of the Imperial Diet to that of the Nazi Party Rally.
- 17 Hermann Glaser, “The Majority Could Have Stayed away without the Risk of Repression,” *The German Public and the Persecution of the Jews, 1933-1945*, ed. by Jörg Wollenberg and Rado Pribić (Atlantic Highlands, N.J: Humanities Press, 1996): 15-21; 15-16. Glaser is quoting a reporter from the *Fränkische Tageszeitung*, November 11, 1938.
- 18 Hannah Arendt, “Eichmann in Jerusalem” I-V, *The New Yorker*, February 16 – March 16, 1963.
- 19 Theodor W. Adorno, *Critical Models: Interventions and Catchwords*, European Perspectives (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998), 89. The lecture was originally titled “Was bedeutet: Aufarbeitung der Vergangenheit,” and was given at a conference on education hosted by the Duetsche Koordinierungsrat der Gesellschaften für Christlich-Jüdische Zusammenarbeit (German Coordinating Council of Organizations for Christian-Jewish Cooperation) in Wiesbaden.
- 20 Michael Petzet later became the President of the German National Committee of ICOMOS (1989-) and the President of ICOMOS International (1999 and 2008). See: “Michael Petzet, Advisor, Conservationist,” “DOCUMENTA (13) - DOCUMENTA (13),” accessed May 25, 2017, <http://d13.documenta.de/#participants/participants/michael-petzet/>.
- 21 Sharon Macdonald, *Difficult Heritage: Negotiating the Nazi Past in Nuremberg and beyond* (Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon ; New York: Routledge, 2009).
- 22 Competition program, section 2.
- 23 Franz Sonnenberger, “A City Confronts Its Past: Nuremberg’s Documentation Centre on the Reich Party Congress Site; 1999,” *Museum International* 51, no. 3 (July 1999): 53–57; 54, accessed May 25, 2017, http://www.unesco.org/ulis/cgi-bin/ulis.pl?catno=116849&set=0059274FF7_2_321&gp=1&lin=1&ll=1. For information on Franz Sonnenberger, see: “Nürnberger Museen-Chef Geht in Ruhestand,” *Nürnberger Nachrichten*

[Nuremberg News] (August 23, 2008), accessed July 19, 2017, <http://www.nordbayern.de/cm/2.244/kultur/nurnberger-museen-chef-geht-in-ruhestand-1.853649>. See also: *Nuremberg: The Imaginary Capital* - Page 272; Sharon McDonald, p. 207.

- 24 Dürschinger & Biefang; Frese & Kleindienst; and Arbeitsgemeinschaft Hennig & Mihm with Dietrich Lohmann from Nuremberg and its environ; Johannes Hölzinger from Bad Nauheim (north of Frankfurt); Architekten am Pündterplatz with Jörg Homeier and Gerold Richter from Munich; Johann Peter Kulka from Cologne; and Volker Staab from Berlin.
- 25 *Wettbewerbe Aktuell*, March 1999, 44-45.
- 26 Franz Sonnenberger et al., eds., *Die Zukunft der Vergangenheit: wie soll die Geschichte des Nationalsozialismus in Museen und Gedenkstätten im 21. Jahrhundert vermittelt werden?* [The future of the past: how should the history of the Third Reich be transmitted in the 21st century?] (Nürnberg: Museen der Stadt Nürnberg, 2000).
- 27 Franz Sonnenberger, "A City Confronts Its Past," 54-55.
- 28 Press release, by Günther Domenig (October 31, 2001), Az-W.
- 29 Presentation script, by Günther Domenig (November 15, 2000), Az-W.
- 30 Competition program, page 14.
- 31 See, for example: pamphlet "*Dokumentationszentrum Reichsparteitagsgelände*," by the Nuremberg City Museums (2001), the section titled "Pfahl aus Glas und Stahl" [spear of glass and steel]; news release "*Neues Dokumentationszentrum Reichsparteitagsgelände – eine nationale Aufgabe*," by the Nuremberg City Museums (November 15, 2000); and news release "*Neues Zeichen – Die Architektur des Dokumentationszentrum Reichsparteitagsgelände*," by the Nuremberg City Museums (November 15, 2000), Az-W.
- 32 News release, by the Public Relations Office, Nuremberg City Museums (November 15, 2000), Az-W.
- 33 News release, by the Public Relations Office, Nuremberg City Museums (November 15, 2000), Az-W.
- 34 Press release, by Günther Domenig (October 31, 2001), Az-W.
- 35 Press release, by Günther Domenig (October 31, 2001), Az-W.
- 36 Press release, by Günther Domenig (October 31, 2001), Az-W.
- 37 Press release, by Walter Anderle (October 31, 2001), Az-W.
- 38 Gregor Schöllgen, "Speichern: In Der Kulisse Des Führers," *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, April 7, 1998, sec. no. 82, page 44, https://fazarchiv.faz.net/fazDocument/saveSingleDoc/FAZ__F19980407REICHSP100.
- 39 Press release, by the Public Relations Office, Nuremberg City Museums (November 15, 2000), Az-W.
- 40 Presentation script, by Günther Domenig (November 15, 2000), Az-W.

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