Spiritus Loci

Studies in Religion and the Arts

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VOLUME 9

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Spiritus Loci

A Theological Method
for Contemporary Church Architecture

By

Bert Daelemans, S.J.

Foreword by

Professor David Brown

Afterword by

Dom Frédéric Debuyst, O.S.B.

BRILL

LEIDEN | BOSTON

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St. François de Molitor, Paris, France (Corinne Callies, Jean-Marie Duthilleul, 2005).
Eucharistic celebration of Pentecost on June 12, 2011, Photograph by Bert Daelemans, S.J.

Daelemans, Bert, author.
Spiritus loci : a theological method for contemporary church architecture / by Bert Daelemans, S.J.
pages cm. -- (Studies in religion and the arts, ISSN 1877-3192 ; volume 9)
Includes bibliographical references and index.
ISBN 978-90-04-28535-4 (hardback : acid-free paper) -- ISBN 978-90-04-28536-1 (e-book) 1. Church architecture. 2. Symbolism in architecture. 3. Theology. I. Title.
NA4800.D28 2015
246'.9--dc23
2014040723

This publication has been typeset in the multilingual "Brill" typeface. With over 5,100 characters covering Latin, IPA, Greek, and Cyrillic, this typeface is especially suitable for use in the humanities.
For more information, please see www.brill.com/brill-typeface.

ISSN 1877-3192
ISBN 978-90-04-28535-4 (hardback)
ISBN 978-90-04-28536-1 (e-book)

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This book is printed on acid-free paper and produced in a sustainable manner.

To my Christian sisters and brothers of Mosul, Iraq, whose sacred spaces were so abruptly and brutally taken from them.

Tell me, since you are so sensitive to the effects of architecture, have you not noticed, when walking through this city, that among its buildings, some are mute, others speak, and lastly, the rare ones, sing?

PAUL VALÉRY (1871–1945)

Every new church in a new style is an experiment. Without the risks of experiments that fail, there is no creation. Perhaps people in the future will point to many failed experiments; but they will also point to the wondrous success: the triumph over the dishonest, the unquestioned, the anxiously conservative. New church building is a victory of spirit, of the creative human spirit and of the Spirit of God that breaks into our weakness.

PAUL TILLICH (1888–1965)

The church building is an exalted song composed out of individual and congregation, out of space, construction and the act of worship, into all of which the same eternal measure is sunk deep. Church building is made possible only through the prior measurement of all elements according to the same measure and where this exalted song rings out, a church has been built.

RUDOLF SCHWARZ (1897–1961)

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Foreword

I write as someone privileged to have been one of Bert Daelemans's examiners when the present work first came to birth in an earlier form, as a doctoral dissertation for the University of Leuven. As I wrote at the time it seemed to me 'an outstanding achievement.' Over previous centuries debate raged over the most appropriate form of architecture for Christian churches, and major tomes were produced by Christian theologians defending particular styles, of which Abbot Suger of St-Denis's defence of Gothic in the twelfth century is perhaps the best known from earlier times. But Renaissance Classicism and Baroque theatricality also had powerful defenders. It was not, however, until the nineteenth century that advocates explicitly engaged in dispute with one another, with the defenders of Gothic Revival in particular arguing that this was the only appropriate religious style. So successful were they that in many countries, including England thanks to Ruskin and Pugin, this became the overwhelmingly dominant approach. Perhaps as a consequence modernist and postmodernist architecture as applied to churches in the twentieth century tended to achieve only minimal defence, in terms of general utility: the cheapest materials available were deployed and an effective gathering space provided for the believing community.

Bert Daelemans will have none of this. He wants us to use a much wider range of criteria that takes both the architecture and religious concerns with maximum seriousness. The result is a work of huge relevance and importance for both theologians and architects. His aim is to move readers well beyond what has dominated discussion in the twentieth century (effectiveness for eucharistic assembly) towards the inclusion of two other elements which he regards as no less essential: the importance of symbolic foci (what he calls 'kerygmatic space') and the need for the architecture to speak in its own right ('synaesthetic space'). In respect of the former he seems to have in mind both symbols that help provide a focus for worship and those that make the individual feel anchored or 'at home' in this particular community. In respect of the latter, as well as a sense of divine immanence, he takes account not only of the conventional vertical transcendence but also of a horizontal one (as with gardens or vistas connected with the church suggestive of the first or final divine garden). So, none of these criteria is narrowly conceived.

His severest criticism is reserved for those who are most hostile to modern architecture, particularly architectural critics such as Denis McNamara, Michael Rose and Moyra Doorly, whereas those who endorse the approach but in a purely utilitarian way such as Peter Hammond, Anders Sővik or Susan

White tend to be treated more lightly than they deserve in the light of Daelemans's own wider criteria. If that contrast leaves us in no doubt about his own preferences, the range of writing on which he draws indicates a very wide breadth of sympathy and concerns, with theologians of the distant past (e.g. Maximus the Confessor and Pseudo-Denys) drawn on no less than more recent philosophical writing, including that of Mikel Dufrenne, Martin Heidegger, Henri Lefebvre, Maurice Merleau-Ponty and Jean-Luc Marion. Particularly intriguing is his reading of Paul Tillich whose views on modern architecture are given an unfamiliar interpretation that renders them more pertinent to the themes of this book.

Very often in reading theological discussion of the arts one comes way with a real sense of disappointment, of an opportunity missed. So concerned has the particular theologian been to develop his general ideas that one might say that he (and it is usually a 'he' that is guilty of this fault) has pursued the argument almost without regard to empirical reality, so seldom have points made been tested against the facts. Bert Daelemans's book is quite the opposite. Again and again we are invited to test his views against particular buildings. In an Appendix a list is provided of the most significant modernist churches of the twentieth century. Although obviously extremely useful, it is the numerous case studies that readers will find especially refreshing and attractive where their own perceptions and experience can be tested against Daelemans's own. In terms of his own criteria I for one found him a little too enthusiastic about the Church of St Gregory of Nyssa in San Francisco but at least that enthusiasm had been born out of a personal visit (which is true of all the churches he discusses in detail). And the personal visit did not entail just looking at the architecture on his own (though he did that) but, more importantly, taking part in the church's worship in order to test the impact of the architecture in interaction with the people. As a result an architecturally outstanding building like Richard Meier's Jubilee church in Rome is found decisively wanting and inadequate.

In short, what follows will be found challenging by both theologians and architects alike which is perhaps after all scarcely surprising since Daelemans has trained in both disciplines: a real treat to follow.

Prof. David Brown
St Mary's College
University of St Andrews

Acknowledgements

You gave me space
when I was narrowed down.

PS 4:2

In our beloved world today, many still suffer from limits that impede space to live. May this study be a small contribution to the divine discovery of limits that create space.

This book is the result of doctoral research held at the KU Leuven, Belgium, and the Jesuit School of Theology in Berkeley, CA. Many people sustained me through this journey. First of all, I am particularly indebted to the Spanish speaking parish communities of St Patrick in Oakland, San Quentin prison in San Francisco, St Catharina in Kiel, and St Michiel in Leuven, where people celebrate Mass in places that are not their own. In name of the God who gives space (cf. Ps 4:2), I have written for them and with them, and dedicate the fruits of my research to all who suffer from limits that impede lived space.

My sincere thanks go to my Jesuit communities of Berkeley and Leuven, for their continuous support and companionship. This study has been made possible thanks to the mission I received from my provincials. I am deeply indebted to all the parish communities mentioned in this book, for having so generously allowed me to take photographs during their celebrations and publish them here. My heartfelt thanks are due to Prof. Dr. Peter De Mey and Prof. Dr. Thomas Coomans de Brachène for their stimulating guidance, and to Prof. Dr. David Brown, Prof. Dr. Joris Geldhof, and Dr. Stéphane Symons for their constructive remarks. My gratitude is also due to Mr. John Arblaster and Rev. Fr. Joe Munitiz for carefully proofreading my text. All mistakes that remain are obviously my own. I am deeply indebted to Prof. Dr. Mark A. Torgerson for his benevolent support. Many thanks to Prof. Dr. James Najarian and Prof. Dr. Eric Ziolkowski, Editors of the series Studies in Religion and the Arts, and to Mr. Maarten Frieswijk, Editor of Religious Studies, and Ms. Paige Sammartino, Production Editor, at Brill, for making this publication possible. I wish to extend my heartfelt gratitude to both Professor David Brown and Dom Frédéric Debuyst, O.S.B. for honoring me with their encouraging words that open and close my own reflections. Their way of doing theology – and theotopy – will always be stimulating for my own work. Last but not least, I would like to thank my parents for the space they have always given me.

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All the photographs are my own. For obvious reasons, making a selection was essential. Obviously, photographs loose the essential dimensions of approaching, entering, and appropriating a church – and thus, the Mystery.

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AF Stock, Wolfgang Jean. *Architekturführer: Christliche Sakralbauten in Europa seit 1950/Architectural Guide: Christian Sacred Buildings in Europe since 1950*. München, Berlin, London, and New York: Prestel Verlag, 2004.

BRL Zahner, Walter, ed. *Baukunst aus Raum und Licht: Sakrale Räume in der Architektur der Moderne*. Lindenberg: Kunstverlag Josef Fink, 2012.

CB Heathcote, Edwin, and Iona Spens. *Church Builders*. Chichester: Wiley and Sons, 1997.

CCA Heathcote, Edwin, and Laura Moffatt. *Contemporary Church Architecture*. Chichester: Wiley-Academy, 2007.

CCC *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/_INDEX .HTM.

CI Schwarz, Rudolf. *The Church Incarnate: The Sacred Function of Christian Architecture*. Translated by Cynthia Harris. Chicago: H. Regnery Co., 1958.

CTG Klanten, Robert, and Lukas Feireiss, eds. *Closer to God: Religious Architecture and Sacred Spaces*. Berlin: Gestalten, 2010.

DS Jean-Luc Marion, *De surcroît: Études sur les phénomènes saturés*. Paris: PUF, Quadrige, 2010 (2001).

EB Schwarz, Rudolf. "'The Eucharistic Building.'" *Faith and Form* 2 (1969): 20–23. Translated by V. Hoecke. Originally published as "Eucharistischer Bau" in *Das Münster* (1960).

EK *Europäischer Kirchenbau 1950–2000 European Church Architecture*. München, Berlin, London, and New York: Prestel Verlag, 2003 (2002).

GW Tillich, Paul. *Die Religiöse Substanz der Kultur*. Vol. IX of *Gesammelte Werke*, edited by Renate Albrecht. Stuttgart: Evangelisches Verlagswerk, 1967.

IE Jean-Luc Marion, *In Excess: Studies of Saturated Phenomena*. Translated by Robyn Horner and Vincent Berraud, Perspectives in Continental Philosophy 27. New York: Fordham University Press, 2002.

KB Schwarz, Rudolf. *Kirchenbau: Welt vor der Schwelle*. Heidelberg: F.H. Kerle Verlag, 1960.

KG Nollert, Angelika, Matthias Volkenandt, Rut-Maria Gollan, Eckhard Frick, eds. *Kirchenbauten in der Gegenwart: Architektur zwischen Sakralität und sozialer Wirklichkeit*. Regensburg: Pustet Verlag, 2011.

LG *Lumen gentium*. http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19641121_lumen-gentium_en.html.

OAA Tillich, Paul. *On Art and Architecture*. Translated by Robert P. Scharlemann. Edited by John and Jane Dillenberger. New York: Crossroad, 1989.

PAE Mikel Dufrenne, *The Phenomenology of Aesthetic Experience*, trans. Edward S. Casey, Albert A. Anderson, Willis Domingo, Leon Jacobson (Evanston, IL: Northwestern, 1973).

PE Henri Lefebvre, *La production de l'espace*. Paris: Anthropos, 1986 (1974).

PEE Mikel Dufrenne, *Phénoménologie de l'expérience esthétique*. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, ^{2}1967 (1953).

PG Practical Guide to Twenty Contemporary Churches (at the end of this book).

PS Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*. Translated by Donald Nicholson-Smith. Oxford: Blackwell, 1991.

SB Stegers, Rudolf. *Sacred Buildings: A Design Manual*. Translated by Julian Reisenberger. Edited by Jasmine Benyamin. Basel, Boston, and Berlin: Birkhäuser, 2008.

SC *Sacrosanctum Concilium*. http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19631204_sacrosanctum-concilium_en.html#_ftn20.

SpEx Ignatius of Loyola. *Spiritual Exercises*. Classics of Western Spirituality. Edited by George E. Ganss. Mahway, NJ: Paulist Press, 1991.

FIGURE 0.1 Cathedral of the Resurrection, *Évry, France* (*Mario Botta, 1995*). *Exterior*

FIGURE 0.2 Christ the Light Cathedral, *Oakland, CA* (*Craig Hartman, 2008*). *Exterior*

The Spirit of the Place

> There are small and large, impressive and important buildings or complexes that dwarf me, that oppress me, that exclude or rebuff me. But there are also buildings or ensembles of buildings, both small ones and monumental ones, that make me feel good, that make me look good, that give me a sense of dignity and freedom, that make me want to stay awhile and that I enjoy using.
>
> PETER ZUMTHOR[1]

In recent years it has become fashionable for well-known 'starchitects' to build a church as a statement of contemporariness and of the challenge to "construct the ineffable."[2] We may think of Mario Botta's *Cathedral of the Resurrection* in Évry (1995) (Fig. 0.1), Álvaro Siza's *Church of Santa Maria* in Marco de Canaveses (1996), Steven Holl's *Chapel of St Ignatius* in Seattle (1997) (Fig. 3.6–8), Heinz Tesar's *Christ Church* in Vienna (2000) (Fig. 5.1), Rafael Moneo's *Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels* in Los Angeles (2002) (Fig. 4.10–12), Richard Meier's *Jubilee Church* in Rome (2003) (Fig. 2.8–9), John Pawson's *Abbey Church of Our Lady* in Novy Dvur (2004) (Fig. 6.1–2), Peter Zumthor's *Bruder Klaus Kapelle* in Wachendorf (2007) (Fig. 1.9), or Craig Hartman's *Cathedral of Christ the Light* in Oakland (2008) (Fig. 0.2).[3] Because the latter "does not look like a church," it has been mocked as "Our Lady of the Laundry Basket" and "Our Lady of the Spilled Coffee Cup." Since it lacks "the conventional architectural markers of churchliness," which are "cross, tower, dome, conventional shapes and proportions," some people discard it as "the greatest theological failure of our age," and thus "ugly as sin" and "no place for God."[4]

---

1 Peter Zumthor, *Thinking Architecture* (Basel: Birkhäuser, 2010 (1999)), 86.

2 I refer to the title of a recent multi-authored volume that gathered contributions of an inter-religious symposium held at the Yale School of Architecture in 2007. See Chapter 2.

3 The first number indicates the chapter where the images can be found. An index of recent church buildings (1915–2015) can be found at the end of this book.

4 Denis R. McNamara, "Oakland Cathedral Update," (February 28, 2008) http://www.creativeminorityreport.com/2008/02/oakland-cathedral-update.html [accessed January 11, 2011]. I have quoted from reactions on his post and from his theological argumentation in *Catholic Church Architecture and the Spirit of the Liturgy* (Chicago and Mundelein, IL: Hillenbrand, 2009), 27. See also Michael Rose, *Ugly as Sin: Why They Changed Our Churches from Sacred Places to Meeting Spaces and How We Can Change Them Back Again* (Omaha, NE: Sophia Institute Press, 2001) and Moyra Doorly, *No Place for God: The Denial of the Transcendent in Modern Church Architecture* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2007).

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In response to this critique, this book aims to provide an apologetic of contemporary church architecture as capable of expressing transcendence. Contemporary church architecture is a rare opportunity for the architect because – within the limits of a liturgical brief – it is entirely free (that is, obliged) to unfold as pure architecture. This freedom is a sacred obligation to go beyond the merely functional, because it is a religious task for the architect to create an atmosphere propitious to encounter the divine. The sacred can be grasped but not caught in space. The fact that places enhance or inhibit an encounter with the sacred is related to the theological belief that mediation plays a role in the encounter with God. In Roman Catholic tradition, the sacred that can be encountered as Mystery is known through revelation and tradition. Therefore, correlations can be made between the sacredness encountered in contemporary church architecture and in theology. Such correlations however do not have the structure of question and answer, where architecture asks questions that theology is eager to answer. I hope that the following pages make clear that the dialogue is mutual, and that theological questions are often answered by architecture, by embodying them and embedding them within the environment. These architectural 'answers' do not bring the reflection to an end but are new points of departure for an itinerary that only ends in the Mystery with a Name and a Face. The following itinerary is born out of my own experience of religious awe caused by contemporary architecture, even secular architecture, in combination with an innate sympathy and learned conviction for liturgical variety.[5]

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5 By way of example, and to start an unending hymn of praise, I am proud to be part of a divine humanity which created such unforgettable and splendid masterpieces as Santiago Calatrava's railway stations in Lyons (1994), Lisbon (1998), and Liège (2009), his *Art Museum* in Milwaukee (2001) and *Opera House* (2003) in Tenerife; Sir Norman Foster's *City Hall* (2002) and *Swiss Re* (2004) in London, his bridge at Millau (2004), and his airports at Stansted (1991) and Beijing (2008); Jean Nouvel's *Institut du Monde Arabe* (1988) and *Musée du Quai Branly* (2006) in Paris; Ieoh Ming Pei's *Pyramid* at the Louvre in Paris (1989); Herzog & de Meuron's *de Young museum* in San Francisco (2005) and *Caixaforum* in Madrid (2008); Frank Gehry's *Guggenheim* in Bilbao (1997) and *Walt Disney Concert Hall* in Los Angeles (2003); Jo Coenen's public library in Amsterdam (2007); Zaha Hadid's MAXXI in Rome (2009); and Tadao Ando's museum in Venice (2009). Hence, my research may be considered but one step within a broader theology of the (secular) built environment. See for instance Sigurd Bergmann, "Space and Spirit: Towards a Theology of Inhabitation," in *Architecture, Aesth/Ethics and Religion*, ed. Sigurd Bergmann (Frankfurt am Main/London: IKO-Verlag für Interkulturelle Kommunikation, 2005), 45–103; "Theology in its Spatial Turn: Space, Place and Built Environments Challenging and Changing the Images of God," (*Blackwell*) *Religion Compass* 1,3 (2007): 353–379; and *Theology in Built Environments: Exploring Religion, Architecture, and*

Limits that Create Space

How 'on earth' does one write a theological assessment of contemporary church architecture? That is the question. On earth, humanity creates buildings to dwell in. Among them, some express religious meaning and shape space for spiritual encounters. At the basis of this book lies an intimate personal experience of awe before the wonders of architecture that 'sing', in the words of French poet Paul Valéry. Obviously, not all contemporary church architecture has this effect of provoking a powerful emotional resonance. The intensity of being grasped by beauty has all to do with theology, and that is one reason why I started this endeavor called *Spiritus loci*, the Spirit of a place.[6] How do places 'sing' about the Spirit? Among these places, I have limited my research to contemporary churches, and more precisely to a selection of them without being exhaustive. This is because my primary objective is to formulate a useful method for a theological assessment of contemporary church architecture, not to assemble an architectural guide for admirers of beauty.

In countries in which churches are being closed or adapted for other functions, the question for the theology of church architecture may appear surprising to some people. In the following pages, readers will not find practical suggestions for the adaptation of churches.[7] Nor will they find

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Design (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 2009). This volume gathers contributions to the panel "Theology in Built Environments" at the second conference on Theological Aesthetics entitled "Theology beyond Balthasar" in Denver 2006.

6 Both terms need some explanation. With *Spirit*, I refer to and suggest a spatial metaphor for the Holy Spirit, as the 'Godspace' of divine encounter. In the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* we read: "It pleased God, in his goodness and wisdom, to reveal himself and to make known the mystery of his will. His will was that [human beings] should have access to the Father, through Christ, the Word made flesh, in the Holy Spirit, and thus become sharers in the divine nature. God, who 'dwells in unapproachable light,' wants to communicate his own divine life to the [human beings] he freely created" (CCC 51–52, quoting DV 2, Eph 1:9; 2:18; 2 Pt 1:4; 1 Tm 6:16; Eph 1:4–5). With *place*, I refer to any church built in the West in the last two decades. Such a geographical and chronological limitation is obviously convenient, but does not exclude occasional excursions over these limits. These excursions may give proof of some fruitfulness of my inductive method for other times and places.

7 For more on the adaptation of churches, see *Quel avenir pour quelles églises?/What Future for Which Churches?* Patrimoine Urbain 3, eds. Lucie K. Morisset, Luc Noppen, and Thomas Coomans (Québec: Presses de l'Université du Québec, 2006). In exceptional cases, such as the *Lumen Church* in London or the *Kapel of the Ontluiking* in Groot-Bijgaarden, new architectural elements transformed existing buildings into entirely new spaces and therefore merit our attention.

historical[8] or liturgical[9] investigations of the topic: excellent studies in these fields are available. The liturgical adaptation of older buildings is an exciting issue, not in the least for liturgical and ecclesiological purposes. I have limited my case studies to newly constructed buildings, however, and in particular to Roman Catholic, Anglican, and Protestant churches built in the last two decades in Europe and North America, while explicitly historicist buildings have not been considered. Contemporary church architecture exhibits a brilliant array of styles, shapes, and shades, currently critiqued as uninspiring grayness. I have chosen this era precisely because its beauty is under attack for so-called theological reasons, as if it were mute, incapable of singing about the divine (and human) Spirit. I have distinguished between three basic types of public buildings: chapels, parish churches, and cathedrals, to which can be added monastic churches as a different, and perhaps ideal case of communitarian appropriation, because monastic communities have the chance to learn daily how to play along with their churches. Among the continuously growing list of recent buildings, I have chosen six major case studies as a fair representation of our age, though not because they are particularly archetypal. I do not attempt exhaustivity because it is my intention to develop a method that can be applied to any church, in order to understand better the mediation of architecture in approaching, entering, and appropriating the Mystery.[10]

8 See R. Kevin Seasoltz, *A Sense of the Sacred: Theological Foundations of Christian Architecture and Art* (New York: Continuum, 2005) and Edwin Heathcote, "The 20th-century Church: The Enigma of Sacred Objectivity," in *Contemporary Church Architecture*, ed. Edwin Heathcote and Laura Moffatt (Chichester: Wiley-Academy, 2007), 8–71.

9 See Steven J. Schloeder, *Architecture in Communion: Implementing the Second Vatican Council through Liturgy and Architecture* (San Francisco, CA: Ignatius Press, 1998) and Stefan Kopp, *Der liturgische Raum in der westlichen Tradition: Fragen und Standpunkte am Beginn des 21. Jahrhunderts*, Ästhetik, Theologie, Liturgik 54 (Berlin: LIT Verlag, 2011).

10 In this book, *mystery* refers to the Divine Mystery of God revealed to human beings: God provides them "with constant evidence of himself in created realities" (CCC 54). "Since our knowledge of God is limited, our language about him is equally so. We can name God only by taking creatures as our starting point, and in accordance with our limited human ways of knowing and thinking. […] God transcends all creatures. We must therefore continually purify our language of everything in it that is limited, imagebound or imperfect, if we are not to confuse our image of God – 'the inexpressible, the incomprehensible, the invisible, the ungraspable' – with our human representations. Our human words always fall short of the mystery of God. Admittedly, in speaking about God like this, our language is using human modes of expression; nevertheless it really does attain to God himself, though unable to express him in his infinite simplicity. Likewise, we must recall that 'between Creator and creature no similitude can be expressed without implying an even greater dissimilitude'; and that 'concerning God, we cannot grasp what he is, but

Theology… or Architecture?

Why is there a need for a theological method to assess contemporary church architecture? Why would theology be interested in architecture, and architecture in theology? The purpose of my book is double: to open *theology* to the "embodied reflection" (Viladesau) of architecture, and to open *architecture* to its (inherent) theological depth (*infra*).

First of all, for *theology* it is not evident to explore architecture. A theology interested in architecture is a reflection about God who communicates with human beings through their own creations. This theology is interested in human beings not *in abstracto* but as *placed beings* for whom it is not indifferent to be placed somewhere. Hence, a theological method helps to lay bare the theological depth of contemporary church architecture, something that might not be evident at first sight. My primary intention is thus to speak about God to my contemporaries, and to do so by way of mediation through contemporary churches.

Second, for *architecture* it is not evident to be evaluated through theological criteria. This is the basic struggle for the interdisciplinary study of *theological aesthetics*, to ensure the autonomy of art in relation to theology. I claim that the theology of architecture cannot be found in theology,[11] but has to be found in architecture, albeit a theologically informed architecture – Tillich would say, a *theonomous*[12] architecture – because no one develops a theology *ex nihilo.* Theological disciplines always build further upon tradition. In order to lay bare the theological depth of contemporary architecture, especially to understand some of its inventiveness, classic dogmas of Christianity are thus presupposed in my book, such as the immanence and transcendence of God. God is both the utterly transcendent whom no one has ever seen and the immanent who visits us and dwells in us. This is certainly a paradox that must find expression in architecture if it is to be theological. This is not to say that

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only what he is not, and how other beings stand in relation to him'" (CCC 40, 42–43, quoting out of the Anaphora of the *Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom*, the *Lateran Council IV*, and Saint Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Contra Gentiles* 1, 30).

11 Hence, the theology of a church building cannot be found in liturgical norms alone. A literal or allegorical correlation between architecture and theology merely reveals its *conceived space* (*infra*). This reduces the tridimensional richness of theology to a one-dimensional platitude.

12 The Protestant theologian Paul Tillich used the term theonomy as the reconciliation between autonomy (only interior law) and heteronomy (only exterior law). On theonomous art in Tillich, see Michael F. Palmer, *Paul Tillich's Philosophy of Art* (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1984), 121–122.

architecture merely *illustrates* what formerly has been defined by dogmatic theology. Architecture not merely *embodies* what can be thought. It is a creative, autonomous discipline that can truly be named "embodied reflection" (Viladesau), because it opens new perspectives to theology. Instead of developing the correlation between different religious schools and one church building, which would have made my endeavor far more complex, I have chosen to do quite the reverse, and develop only one theological reflection, but examining its validity on multiple examples of contemporary church architecture. Hence, the case studies are both source and proof of the theological method I propose.

Because I am not developing a *theological aesthetics* in its *epistemological* concern towards sense knowledge and beauty, but rather present an *inductive* theological reflection situated within practical case studies, I do not discuss architecture *in abstracto* but explore concrete buildings. In limiting myself to Western churches of the two last decades, I exclude the opportunity to examine the correlation between twentieth-century modes of architecture and theology. In this regard, the method that I propose is not historical because I choose to develop a theology of our time in relation to architecture of our time. Naturally, I believe that my method is also applicable to historic buildings that are used today. In the following pages, suggestions can be read between the lines in order to adapt our historic churches to contemporary modes of Christian celebration.

This is exactly the reason why I have chosen not to give *a priori* definitions of what constitutes so-called *sacred* or *religious architecture*. This can only be defined inductively. In my own experience and drawing on Rahner and Tillich, it is a platitude to distinguish between secular and sacred art only on the basis of *subject matter* (or *function*, in the case of architecture). Architecture can evoke mystery – the mystery of life or of being. Even a railway station can do so. Hence, the religiosity or sacredness (and thus theological value) of architecture cannot be found in the *object* alone. Nor is it merely *subjective*. The phenomenological concept of *atmosphere* helps me to come to terms with a particular sacredness of architecture that has not only objective reasons, but subjective reasons as well (see Chapter 3).

In this regard, my use of terms such as, on the one hand, religious, spiritual, sacred, mystical, and sacramental, and, on the other hand, transcendence, mystery, ineffable, holy, and divine must be understood within a context of Roman Catholic theology and not some esoteric vagueness that several architects might have in mind.[13] These terms are not interchangeable, because they

13 "Christian faith cannot accept 'revelations' that claim to surpass or correct the Revelation of which Christ is the fulfilment, as is the case in certain non-Christian religions and also

refer to different realities: for instance, spiritual *experiences*, sacred *objects*, and divine *realities*. The first group of terms concerns adjectives, and the second, nouns.[14] The basic distinction on which my endeavor is built is between *holy* and *sacred* – hence, not between *sacred* and *profane*. This tension is precisely expressed in the title: *Spiritus loci.* Whereas the former (*holy, Spiritus*) refers to God, the latter (*loci, sacred*) indicates *what mediates between God and human beings*. Theological aesthetics speaks only about the holy (theology) *through the sacred* (aesthetics), and only about the sacred *in reference to the holy*. Even though people speak of 'holy places' and human beings are a 'mystery', in this book, I reserve the terms *holy*, *mystery*, *ineffable, divine, immanence*, and *transcendence* for God. They may be considered as divine Names of the Trinitarian God. Even though people speak of 'sacred objects' when they have a religious subject matter and of 'religious people' when they have a religious vocation, in this book, I use *sacred* and *religious* as synonyms of *sacramental* and only in reference to buildings. Hence, architecture can be called *sacred* or *religious* when it is *sacramental*, when it mediates the *divine mystery.* This experience is then called *spiritual* or even *mystical* because it is an experience *in the Spirit* as the Godspace in which God and human beings meet. It should be noted that such a spiritual experience might exist only in potency and not in act.

The terms *sacred architecture* and *religious architecture* are synonyms that generally indicate architecture with a sacred function, without making distinctions between religious conceptions of the sacred. Interestingly, for an American public, one author even speaks of *spiritual architecture* instead of the *sacred architecture* for her European public.[15] It might be noted that I have not defined the term *sacred* (or *religious*) *architecture.* Because I move in the field of Christian theology, I do not even use these terms and prefer to speak of

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in certain recent sects which base themselves on such 'revelations'." (CCC 67) In discussing the different authors, I have often respected their (diverging) terminology. This might add confusion. Therefore, at the start of my endeavor, I clarify my own definitions.

14 Even though *transcendent, holy*, *divine*, and *ineffable* can be used as adjectives, in this book I use them in the first place to indicate *the* holy, *the* divine, and *the* ineffable: that is to say, in the context of Roman Catholic theology, the Christian God who reveals Godself in Christ. Note that I do not use the adjective *mysterious* for God due to its esoteric associations. There is no secrecy in God: God is not mysterious because there is nothing to hide, like in some Egyptian temples. On the contrary, God reveals Godself *as mystery*: this is an experience of positivity rather than negativity, of *more* rather than *less.* See in this regard the excellent article of Pedro Rodríguez Panizo, "Dios Misterio," *Sal Terrae* 93 (2005): 241–251.

15 Phyllis Richardson, *New Spiritual Architecture* (New York: Abbeville Press, 2004), released in Great Britain as *New Sacred Architecture* (London: Laurence King, 2004).

the more neutral *church architecture* (architecture with an ecclesial function) because I believe in the potential of everything created to be sacramental, that is to say, to 'sing' about God. For Tillich, the Botticelli was sacred art (*infra*), but much so-called religious art does not deserve this name because it does not lead to a spiritual experience. On the one hand, there is no such a thing as *profane* (or *secular*) *architecture*, because even buildings with a profane character, such as airports or concert halls might evoke a sense of religious awe. On the other hand, there is architecture that so dehumanizes people that it might be called (with Tillich) *demonic.* I have no problems with classifying Albert Speer's buildings under this heading.

Again, my intention is not to define *sacred architecture* as distinct from secular architecture, but to indicate when architecture is *sacramental* in creating space for a divine encounter – hence, not in relation to the *profane* but to the *holy*. Only then might such space be rightly called sacred. Hence, with the term *sacred space* I indicate not the architecture as such but the *space* in its perceived, conceived, and lived tridimensionality. Such *space* is created in the architectural experience or atmosphere (and thus needs *object* and *subject,* or rather, *event* and *dweller*). In order to indicate the *sacrality* of this tridimensional space, I propose its transposition into *synaesthetic, kerygmatic,* and *Eucharistic space* as three dimensions of *mystagogic space*, that is, how contemporary church architecture, as *theotopy*, introduces into the Mystery that theology is about.

Mystagogic Space

The point of this book is principally to provide a threefold method for the theological assessment of contemporary church architecture. How does one 'read' a church? Which heuristic tools can be provided not to lose one's way in this vast domain? Hence, I see it as my task to find limits that create space. I propose an itinerary, a journey of approaching, entering, and appropriating churches in order to approach, enter, and appropriate the Mystery with a Name and a Face. Churches are places of encounter. The practical question at the basis of my research is how buildings can foster this encounter. At the core of this book is the question of how matter mediates spirit – more precisely, how churches mediate space for a divine encounter in the Spirit. Hence, the reader will not find a survey of reactions by parish communities to their churches. One will not find an exhaustive discussion of all churches that have recently been built. I will not provide a complete theology of place and space, but only

make available one building block for doing so.[16] Likewise, one will not find a comparative analysis of the architectural expression of the sacred in different religions. Although the sacramental repercussions are obvious, I have not pursued this by exploring the thought of major sacramental theologians. Furthermore, no correlation will be found between contemporary architecture and the best of postmodern theology. Likewise, the following is not an exposition of the theology of architecture of major theologians such as Balthasar, Rahner, or Tillich. All these paths are legitimate and fascinating, but my purpose is more modest and less bound to the thought of any particular theologian. I have chosen an inductive method based on approaching, entering, and appropriating buildings as sources for theological reflection. This is not an individual endeavor, and therefore one must be attentive to the way communities use their buildings. My habitat is Roman Catholic, but my vision is broad enough to learn from Protestant and Anglican ways of expressing our Christian faith.[17]

The three quotes from Valéry, Tillich, and Schwarz that open this itinerary articulate well my Trinitarian approach.[18] First of all, I am interested in the fact

16 In this sense, my purpose is close to that of the German Protestant theologian Tobias Woydack, *Der räumliche Gott: Was sind Kirchengebäude theologisch?* Kirche in der Stadt 13 (Hamburg-Schenefeld: EB-Verlag, 2009 (2005)). Based on the analysis of two case studies, Woydack's essay consists of three parts. First, "Kirchenräume und Menschen" (*Church Spaces and People*) provides a communitarian approach to church buildings based on the relational understanding of space by the German sociologist Martina Löw and the understanding of atmosphere by the German philosopher Gernot Böhme, whom I will refer to further on. Second, "Kirchenräume und Theologie" (*Church Spaces and Theology*) discusses the Lutheran problematic between architecture and theology, in particular the traditional understanding of churches as mere profane places for sacred actions. Third, in "Der räumliche Gott" (*The Spatial God*) Woydack suggests his own theological model for understanding "die menschliche Erfahrbarkeit Gottes als räumliches Geschehen," and not the 'spatiality' of God suggested by the title. Woydack, 12. Basically, Woydack translates a sociological model of space into theology because the latter concerns a relationship as well (between God and humanity). His purpose is to overcome the rigid dichotomy between sacred and profane, by choosing church architecture as a case study for the human-divine relationship, which he understands in spatial terms. Although my purpose is the same, I draw more upon case studies to formulate my itinerary, and do not limit my bibliography to German authors.

17 It has never been my intention to exclude Orthodoxy from this endeavor, but most churches built in recent years in the West are Roman Catholic and Protestant.

18 See the dedication page. Paul Valéry, *Eupalinos, ou l'architecte* (Paris: Gallimard, 1924), 105–106; Paul Tillich, "On the Theology of Fine Art and Architecture," in *On Art and*

that some buildings are mute, others speak, and others sing. Hence, one has to listen to buildings, hear what they say, and how they sing. The first step for a theology of architecture is to know how to *approach* a building, and to be attentive especially to an anonymous sacredness created by *space* and *light*. Hence, the first dimension of my threefold inductive method is an attempt to come to terms with what I call *synaesthetic space*, with the help of phenomenology. This dimension of the *Spiritus loci* corresponds to the Spirit and to creation. Secondly, I borrow from Tillich his feverish appeal for contemporariness against historicism. His suggestion that victories of the divine Spirit are victories of the human spirit as well provoke the question how humanity is involved, as co-creator, in the endeavor of creating spaces for divine encounter in the Spirit. Entering a building is *entering* a meaningful story. Schwarz suggests that the only sacred measure of value is not written in the stars but has been incarnate Logos. With *words* and *images*, churches point to the Name and Face of God, Jesus Christ. This second dimension of my method draws on hermeneutics in order to clarify what I call *kerygmatic space.* Hence, this dimension of the *Spiritus loci* corresponds to Christ and to incarnation. Finally, as Schwarz suggests, church building is an exalted song composed out of individual and congregation. Matter matters when persons not only approach and enter, but also *appropriate* the Mystery of the Spirit as space of divine encounter. This third dimension of my method draws on eschatology in order to explain *Eucharistic space* as the dimension of the *Spiritus loci* that corresponds to the Father and to redemption.

This book consists of two parts, divided into five chapters. Part 1 (Chapters 1 and 2) lays the foundations for my threefold method, which I develop in Part 2 (Chapters 3–5). Chapter 1, "Theotopy," is methodological and epistemological. My major epistemological question is how architecture can be theology. Coining the term *theotopy* (Gr. *topos*, place) allows an exposition of the embodied specificity of such non-verbal theology (Gr. *logos*, word). Theological Aesthetics, a young discipline within systematic theology, examines this issue, but has not done so yet in relation to architecture. My book proposes to redress this lacuna by turning theology's attention to space. The French sociologist Henri Lefebvre may be considered the instigator of a 'spatial turn' in the social sciences. One triad of his complex thought – *perceived, conceived,* and *lived space* – baptized as *synaesthetic, kerygmatic*, and *Eucharistic space*, forms the backbone of my theotopical method. Case studies of recent churches are my

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Architecture, ed. John Dillenberger (New York: Crossroad, 1987), 204–213, at 213; Rudolf Schwarz, *The Church Incarnate: The Sacred Function of Christian Architecture* (Chicago, IL: Henri Regnery, 1958), 229.

main theological sources and thus form an essential part of my inductive method (seeing, judging, acting). The exercise consists in correlating them to major theological issues of creation, incarnation, and redemption.

Chapter 2, "Fifty Shades of Gray," is basically a *status quaestionis* of contemporary church architecture in theological reflection. This foundational chapter has three parts. Firstly, because contemporary church architecture builds on the architectural Modernism and the Liturgical Movement of the early twentieth century, I present the "architecture of immanence" of the twentieth century.[19] Secondly, I deal with the current critique of a unilateral emphasis on the immanence of a *domus ecclesiae* and the proposed return to the transcendence of a *domus Dei*. Finally, I intuit in the most recent literature a desire to return to transcendence, but without eschewing contemporariness.

The following three chapters unfold my threefold inductive method for a theological assessment of contemporary church architecture. Each of them draws on one discipline, and considers it from the specific point of view of architecture: phenomenology, hermeneutics, and eschatology. How are these disciplines related to architecture? The choice for these disciplines lies in the examined case studies. My itinerary from place to Spirit goes from architecture to theology, from case study to theological reflection. Hence, each of the three following chapters consists of two parts. The first, practical part takes two case studies as major sources. The second, theoretical part builds further on the material retrieved from the analysis of case studies in order to explore the relationship between architecture and the aforementioned disciplines, in order to clarify the theological richness embedded in architecture. Hence, Chapter 3, "Synaesthetic Space," draws on *phenomenology* in order to lay bare the importance of the human body in *approaching* the Mystery by approaching a church. Chapter 4, "Kerygmatic Space," draws on *hermeneutics* in order to lay bare how

19 This can only be done rather briefly in this book, in which there is unfortunately no place for a thorough discussion of twentieth-century architecture in relation to the theology of the second Vatican Council. This would have been another, surely appealing, book. For a specific account of the relationship between architectural modernism and the liturgical movement, see Walter Zahner, *Rudolf Schwarz Baumeister der neuen Gemeinde: Ein Beitrag zum Gespräch zwischen Liturgietheologie und Architektur in der liturgischen Bewegung* (Altenberge: Oros, 1992). In the current book, *modernism* refers to the architectural style known as the International Style based on functionalism, the 'honest' (that is, undecorated) use of modern materials such as concrete, glass, and steel by rejecting ornament and historical styles, and a rationalism in design, which often translates into rectangularity. Le Corbusier's *Vers une architecture* (1923) can count as foundational in the movement. Other exponents of modernism are Walter Gropius and Ludwig Mies van der Rohe. After World War I, modernism was the answer to a huge building need.

meaning is made present in architecture. Understanding is a way to *enter* the Mystery. Chapter 5, “Eucharistic Space,” draws on *eschatology* in order to lay bare how worshiping communities can *appropriate* their churches, playing along with them as with a musical instrument, in order for them to sing.

Finally, I add two appendices, an *index* of church buildings built since 1995 (without exhaustivity) and a *practical guide* to twenty of these, according to my threefold method for a theology of architecture.

PART 1

Foundations

FIGURE 1.1 Dominican Chapel, *Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium* (AGDA (*Benoît Gillon, Géry Despret, 2010*)). *Interior*

CHAPTER 1

Theotopy

Architecture and Theology

> If, from the start, we do not identify theology with a theology that uses words, but understand it as the total human self-expression, insofar as it is backed up by God's self-communication, religious phenomena in the arts themselves would be constituent elements of an adequate theology.
>
> KARL RAHNER[1]

In this introductory chapter, I will answer three questions concerning the intersection between architecture and theology. *What* has architecture to do with theology? *Why* bring them together? *How* is one to do so?

What? Limits that Create Space

> I experienced such heavenly bliss that it submerged – if only for a moment – all my present sorrows and troubles and made them insignificant. [...] It is the bliss of some final knowledge of the all in all and of all in oneself, of infinite fullness in multiplicity, of the world in unity.
>
> SERGEI BULGAKOV[2]

A church building is experienced basically in three situations: as *atmosphere* for an individual visitor, as *signpost* in a city, and as *stage* for a worshiping assembly. The terms atmosphere, signpost, and stage indicate three different 'spaces' that are opened in one place, depending on different interlocutors (visitor, city, assembly). Hence, the concept of space is *relational* and emerges in the interaction of human beings with places and their social goods.[3] It is the task of any discipline considering the concept of space to clarify the

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1 Karl Rahner, "Art against the Horizon of Theology and Piety," in *Theological Investigations*, vol. XIII, trans. Joseph Donceel (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1992), 162–168, at 163.

2 Sergei Bulgakov, "Hagia Sophia," in *A Bulgakov Anthology*, ed. Nicolas Sernov and James Pain (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1976), 13–14.

3 Martina Löw, *Raumsoziologie* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 2001), 271. She defines space as *relational* in contrast to a container model: "Raum ist eine relationale (An)Ordnung sozialer Güter und Menschen (Lebewesen) an Orten. (*Space is a relational arrangement/*

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emergence of space in this interaction, as the German sociologist Martina Löw suggests. Hence, such a relational model of space is a source for the theological repercussions of a church as atmosphere, signpost, and stage. From the theological viewpoint of this book, I will rename these dimensions as *synaesthetic, kerygmatic*, and *Eucharistic space*.

The leading research question of my book is how to examine contemporary church architecture from a theological point of view. My aim is to develop a method for assessing architecture as theology – or rather, *theotopy*, if one wants to acknowledge the particular way in which places communicate meaning different from the word. One can treat this issue from different perspectives, either emphasizing the building's structure, form, or function, according to the classic Vitruvian triad (*firmitas, venustas, utilitas*).[4] In other words, the emphasis can lie on the building's aesthetic impact upon our body, its formal message addressed to our mind, or the way it is used liturgically by a worshiping community. This threefold framework corresponds with considering the building as atmosphere, signpost, and stage.

For instance, in a particularly refined way, the Belgian architect Tom Callebaut transformed a Gothic Revival 1920s-chapel in Groot-Bijgaarden, Belgium into the nondenominational *Kapel van de ontluiking* (*Chapel of disclosure*) (2011) (Fig. 1.2).[5] *Atmosphere*: in a contemporary *rite de passage*, one is invited to remove one's shoes before entering the sacred space, which is entirely filled with sand. The first encounter with the sacred occurs through bodily contact. *Signpost*: timber shutters in the walls can be opened (in direct reference to the chapel's name) in order to reveal meaning, whether Christian (exposing the iconography of the 1920s) or not. *Stage*: apart from individual visits, prayer sessions and sacramental celebrations for small groups of in principle any denomination or religion may take place here. The shutters allow for the creation of multiple situations: there is freedom to play this place as a musical instrument and to

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order of social goods and people (*living beings*) *in places.*)" Löw, 224. German Protestant authors who examine the relationship between God and space draw on her work, such as Umbach, Wüthrich, Woydack, and Beyrich. See the bibliography.

4 Vitruvius was a Roman architect who became famous for his treatise *De Architectura*. The Vitruvian triad indicates that any building must be solid, beautiful, and functional. Marcus Vitruvius Pollio, *The Ten Books of Architecture*, trans. Morris Hicky Morgan (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1960).

5 This new spiritual room (literally *Chapel of disclosure*, with a play on words in "taking of the shutters") is part of the *Vlaams Lasalliaans Perspectief* of the De La Salle Christian Brothers. See http://www.vlp-scholennetwerk.be/nl/Foto-s/Fotoalbum/Kapel-van-de-Ontluiking/ [accessed April 1, 2013].

FIGURE 1.2 (Chapel of disclosure) Kapel van de ontluiking, *Groot-Bijgaarden, Belgium* (*Tom Callebaut, 2011*)

adapt its range of sacredness from iconoclasm to iconography, from emptiness to symbolism.[6]

6 Nevertheless, the question remains whether this freedom to adapt allows meaning to emerge or rather imposes only preconceived meaning – or lack of meaning. I also wonder

The main hypothesis of my book is that all three dimensions have to be taken into account in a theological assessment. In other words, architecture is not merely an *illustration* of theological doctrine, but has the capacity to *nourish* theological reflection. The richness of the architectural experience is theology when it lays bare something of the relationship between God and humanity – the Jesuit theologian Karl Rahner (1904–1984) would say, “what people are in the sight of God.”[7] Based upon the Biblical understanding of this relationship as occurring “in the Spirit” (1 Co 3:16; Jn 14:17), the underlying question for the systematic theologian is thus *how* and *why* human places (*loci*) reveal the divine Spirit (*Spiritus*) as space of encounter. Hence, church architecture is not theological in the sense of decoding or illustrating doctrinal information about God, but rather in the sense of being atmosphere, signpost, and stage for a human-divine encounter in the Spirit. It had been my initial intuition and purpose to correlate architecture and theology in such a way as to draw clear connections between places and the Holy Spirit, but such an overarching endeavor has proven itself too vast for this research project – or rather too defined for the Spirit, whose strength it is not to draw attention to herself. Nevertheless, the intrinsic correlation between Spirit and space encountered during this research – that is to say, the spiritual nature of places and, if I may say so, the spatial nature of the Spirit – has pointed out the fecundity of such an intuition. In any case, I would continue this research by clarifying and articulating the role of the Holy Spirit as divine Space of Encounter, and, not necessarily consciously, the first divine Person encountered within church architecture. In this way, faithful to the best of the mystical tradition, the theological assessment of something as common as architecture opens a new space (atmosphere, signpost, and stage) for the *encounter between persons*. For this to happen, space is needed, physically, metaphorically, and imaginatively – a place for loving, believing, and hoping.

In short, the working hypothesis at the start of my endeavor is, out of the aesthetic-religious experience of contemporary church architecture, to posit the existence of an anonymous *Spiritus loci*, which I propose to name gradually over the following chapters. In order to do so, let me expound the complex correlation between theology and architecture as the interdisciplinary field in which I move, live, and have my being (Act 17:28). In order to clarify what I understand as *Spiritus loci*, I will now borrow from three sources of Christian tradition: biblical, patristic, and spiritual. On the one hand, there is the foundational experience of Jacob at Bethel, the House of God. On the other hand,

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whether opening the shutters reveals only the past or provides an orientation towards the future.

7 Rahner, *Against*, 163.

three archetypes of sacred buildings in the Bible lie at the basis of contemporary church architecture.

Biblical Foundations. Tent, Temple, Ecclesia

> Jacob came to a certain place
> and stayed there for the night.
> Gn 28:11

> Remove the sandals from your feet,
> for the place on which you are standing is holy ground.
> Ex 3:5

An archetypal biblical example of the threefold experience of space is found in Jacob's dream at Bethel (Gn 28:11-22). What to him was initially an indifferent 'location' (*makom*) to spend the night became a meaningful 'place' – Bethel, house of God – through the religious and surprisingly spacious *experience* of a particular theophany. His spiritual itinerary brought him from *location* to *place*. This itinerary from location to place is a first clue to understand *Spiritus loci* as *space*.

First of all, Jacob's *approach* to the Mystery was *spatial*, portrayed in the stairway leading to heaven. The 'virtual God-space' that opened *before* him and expanded *around* him in a dream was an unanticipated 'spaciousness' out of the blue. The most important characteristic of this space was that it was *inhabited*, as "the angels of God were ascending and descending" and the Lord stood there (Gn 28:12). Jacob had only his body to approach this location. This corresponds to *synaesthetic space* (space-light). The event of 'another space' (*heterotopia*) just happened *within* that indeterminate location – shaping it into place.

Secondly, Jacob enters the Mystery by giving the location a *name* and a *face*, which serve as footnotes and subtitles for the event: Bethel, house of God. This name indicates Jacob's *understanding* of the place and his intention to be reintroduced into its mystery: this corresponds to *kerygmatic space* (word-image).

Finally, Jacob 'practices' the place (de Certeau, *infra*) by setting up a *stone* found on the site in order to remember and *appropriate* the event, "acting on the given and creating out of the given."[8] Jacob the architect shapes the location *into a place*, a memorial or monument. This human action corresponds to *Eucharistic space* (dance-garden). In the case of contemporary

8 "To experience is to learn; it means *acting on* the given and *creating out of* the given. The given *cannot be known in itself*. What can be *known* is a reality that is a construct of experience, a creation of *feeling and thought*." Yi-Fu Tuan, *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience* (Minneapolis, MN and London: The University of Minnesota Press, 2011 (1977)), 9. My emphasis.

church architecture, it is essential for a worshiping community to *appropriate* a church creatively in order to experience its *Spiritus loci* as Godspace of encounter.

In addition to this foundational experience of Jacob, there are three fundamental types of sacred spaces in the Bible that can be distinguished in their emphasis upon an object, a place, or a person – even though all of them relate to God. First, divine presence can be encountered related to an *object*, like the Ark of the Covenant, leading to a mobile *tent* or *tabernacle* model, in which God is on the move with the nomads. Second, divine presence can be encountered in the *place* of a theophany, leading to the stationary *temple* model, indicating and separating a permanent holy place, like the experience of Jacob. Third, divine presence can be encountered in relation to a *person*, leading to a personified *synagogue* or *ecclesia* model based on encounter, that is, a radical shift in the attribution of holiness from place and object to person.[9]

The tent-model. The First Testament is characterized by a paradoxical tension between place and placelessness: the God of exile and desert is the God of the Promised Land.[10] This is the paradox between the universal and the local: the omnipresent God can be encountered in particular places. Paradoxically, God could be encountered in the undomesticated wilderness and in Babylon. In the desert, the place of divine presence and encounter was symbolized in the Tent of Encounter, protecting the Ark of the Covenant, which moved with God's people through the desert (Ex 29:45-46).[11] This 'place' of the Ark was at once 'another-place' and a 'non-place', whose 'holiness' did not stick to the location: a *heterotopia*, from which the rest of the places could be seen in a new light, and a *utopia*, the mirror of an ideal place more real than ordinary reality.[12] A variant of this first model is the one given by the Syrian Naäman, who, after his cure, asks the prophet Elisha to take with him "two mules' burden of earth." (2 KGS 5:17) Holy ground becomes mobile. As the Dutch liturgical

9 For this section I was inspired by Yves Congar, *Le mystère du Temple* (Paris: Cerf, 1958); Harold W. Turner, *From Temple to Meeting House: The Phenomenology and Theology of Places of Worship* (The Hague: Mouton, 1979); Philip Sheldrake, *Spaces for the Sacred: Place, Memory, and Identity* (London: SCM, 2001); R. Kevin Seasoltz, *A Sense of the Sacred: Theological Foundations of Christian Architecture and Art* (New York: Continuum, 2005), 66–81; and Paul Post, "Tussen tempel, zo-maar-een-dak-boven-wat-hoofden, grot en zandbak: Notities over rituele ruimte," in *Ruimten voor heiliging*, ed. Joris Geldhof, Leuvense Cahiers voor Praktische Theologie 13 (Antwerpen: Halewijn, 2011), 62–79.

10 Seasoltz, *Sense*, 70.

11 Congar, 3–6; Seasoltz, *Sense*, 75.

12 Michel Foucault, "Des Espaces autres," in *Architecture-Mouvement-Continuité* 5 (1984): 46–49.

scholar Paul Post points out, this model of Naäman is an intermediary form between the temple model and the encounter model, because it transfers the sacredness of a place to an object. This first model highlights the *liminality* of sacred spaces, as places of transformation, of dying and being reborn.[13] One could say that the tent-model reminds us of the omnipresence of God and the potential of all places to be places of divine encounter. It also emphasizes the *relativity* of specific sacred spaces. This tent-model has clearly been at the background of the design for *Christ the Light Cathedral* in Oakland (Fig. 0.2).

Contrary to a Temple where an immanent God dwells permanently (*yashab*), the Tent points at the transcendence of a God who might visit occasionally (*shakan*).[14] This theological difference, Turner observes, makes the tabernacle an unusual place in the history of sacred space, because it stands in contrast to, and does not develop into a temple model.[15] The tabernacle represents theological aspects that the Temple does not, being "but a pale reflection of the desert tent, because the tent's oracular, military, and prophetic aspects have disappeared."[16]

The tent is unique in the history of religions, for no other groups around Israel adopted the tabernacle model, which they surely despised. Its predecessors might be found in the patriarchal tradition, where the wandering people are accompanied (perhaps in a tent-shrine) by their nomadic "most high God" (Gn 14:18–20), unlike the Canaanite gods, which have feet but walk not (Ps 115:7). As memorials of theophanies, God's people leave shrines behind, at Mamre (Gn 13:18), Beersheba (26:23–25), Shechem (33:18–20), and Bethel (28:10–22). These small shrines develop into more permanent altars; the emphasis shifts back from transcendence to immanence, but little suggests that these sanctuaries were perceived as *domus Dei*: "All indications are of a dynamic relation with people rather than with places, with the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob rather than of Beersheba and Bethel."[17]

The tent was not unlike the ordinary dwellings, and thus "domestic in character, suggestive of the more intimate and personal nature of the relations

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13 Arnold van Gennep, *Les Rites de Passage* (Paris: Librairie Critique Émile Nourry, 1909; Mouton: Maison des Sciences de l'Homme, 1969); Victor Turner, *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure* (Chicago: Aldine Publishing Company, 1969) and "Passages, Margins, and Poverty: Religious Symbols of Communitas," in *Dramas, Fields, and Metaphors: Symbolic Action in Human Society* (London and Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1974), 231–271.

14 Turner, *Temple*, 93.

15 Turner, *Temple*, 92.

16 Yehezkel Kaufmann, *The Religion of Israel: From its Beginnings to the Babylonian Exile*, trans. M. Greenberg (New York: Schocken, 1960), 184, quoted in Turner, *Temple*, 94.

17 Turner, *Temple*, 92.

between God and [people]."[18] It is notable that Turner not so much observes that the tent expresses the pilgrim nature of God (theologically), but even more *of the people of God as such* (ecclesiologically):

> The tabernacle therefore represents the *dynamic and eschatological nature of existence as God's people*, over against more static conceptions of a consummation indicated by the building of temples where the gods may dwell with [people]. Further, the very simplicity and plainness of a tent of meeting stands in contrast to the luxury and grandeur of the temple type as it develops in history [...]; it therefore prefigures the later conceptions of God dwelling in the humble and contrite heart of the simplest of his worshippers, or, in the New Testament thought, becoming incarnate in a manger and remaining incognito before [people].[19]

Moses's Tabernacle thus teaches us a lesson for contemporary church architecture: theology of architecture does not search for what a building tells us about God, but rather what it reveals about *our corporeal identity as related to God and to one another*. Today, it is essential not to introduce this model too literally into our architecture. An older comment, dating from 1959, is of enduring value: "The tent as a prototype of church dwelling is of significance not in terms of form, but in terms of function."[20] A literal application of the tent model, as in the *Cathedral of Christ the King* at Liverpool, suggests "the reverse of anything mobile and transitory."[21] In conclusion, I agree with Turner that this model "deserves fresh consideration on account of its symbolic features; to build plainly and simply for present uses instead of splendidly and monumentally for all time."[22]

The Temple-model. However, for Israel, this mobile holy non-place was only a temporary solution: Solomon built a permanent house of God in the Temple of

18 Ibid., 94.

19 Ibid., 94–95. My emphasis.

20 P. Chapman and C. Lake, "Towards a Theology of Architecture," *Motive* (Nashville) 19/8 (1959): 32, quoted in Turner, *Temple*, 95.

21 Turner, *Temple*, 96.

22 Ibid., 96. Recent realizations that suggest values of mobility and temporariness and the fact that church building is always an approximation, are Shigeru Ban's *Paper Church* (1995) at Kobe, Japan and Daniel Bonilla's *Los Nogales School Chapel* (2002) at Bogotá, Colombia and *Chapel Porciuncula de la Milagrosa* (2004) at Calera, Colombia. See the excellent chapter on the essential poverty of architecture, "Passejant per Betània," in Eloi Aran Sala, *Cap a una arquitectura de l'esperança: L'espai religiós contemporani a la recerca de sentit* (Lleida: Pagès Editors, 2012), 61–71.

Jerusalem (1 KGS 6-8). The solemnity of transferring the Ark from humble tent to monumental temple had repercussions on religious experience: the "temple modified the relationship between God and the people."[23] The second model corresponds to the experience of many cultures and religions (Aztecs, Incas, Celts, Greeks, Romans, Mount Sinai, Mount Tabor, Lourdes). Biblical archetypes for this model are the burning bush for Moses (Ex 3:4-5) and the stairway to heaven for Jacob (Gn 28:10-19), but also the mountains of Sinai and Tabor. As suggested by the Romanian anthropologist Mircea Eliade, in different cultures and religions mountains have a special archetypal attraction in symbolizing a solid, secure, permanent, and powerful connection between heaven and earth.[24] This temple model is found everywhere where a monument is erected to commemorate a moment of special religious significance. Even though there was no temple in the time of the patriarchs, they felt the need to separate specific holy places from ordinary space: although Abraham could encounter God everywhere (Gn 17:1), in particular places he expressed the divine presence materially by building an altar and invoking God's Name (Gn 12:7; 13:4.18).

In the temple type or *domus Dei*, emphasis lies on communication with the divine, not so much with other people. In this light, Turner observes how small the usable space in ancient temples often is, and the great bulk of solid masonry is often there only for the glorification of God. Today, we might think of the monumentality in Évry (Fig. 0.1), which in my view serves first of all to glorify a starchitect. Ancient temples were built as precious caskets: this idea still survives in Évry and in *Notre-Dame de l'Arche d'Alliance* in Paris (Figs. 4.15 and 4.16).

Burckhardt contrasts the imperfection of Hindu temples and Romanesque churches that never disrupts the unity of the whole with the "inhumanity" and "Luciferian confusion" of modern architecture pretending to be perfect.[25] If today there is to be a new style after Modernism, it must somehow incorporate imperfection.

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23 Seasoltz, *Sense*, 76; see also Congar, 49–53.

24 Mircea Eliade, *Images and Symbols: Studies in Religious Symbolism*, trans. Philip Mairet (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991).

25 In Hindu temples, "certain architectural elements are slightly displaced with respect to the symmetry of the design. The geometrical symbolism of the building as a whole is not thereby obscured; on the contrary, it retains its character as principal form while avoiding confusion with the purely material form of the temple. [...] The surfaces and angles of a Romanesque church for example are always found to be inexact when strict measurements are applied to them, but the unity of the whole imposes itself all the more concisely. [...] Most modern constructions on the contrary can show a purely 'additive' unity, while they present a regularity in their detail that is 'inhuman' – because it is apparently absolute – as if it were a question not of 'reproducing' the transcendent model using the means

This temple-model or *domus Dei* is also surprisingly found in the oldest Christian house-church at Dura-Europos: whereas this place for Christian worship was clearly a house, especially the baptistery (and perhaps also the Eucharistic *triclinium*) was lavishly decorated with Biblical narratives and Christian symbols, giving the walls the kerygmatic function of a book into which one steps.[26] The images served to *transform* or *transfigure* the house into church and representation of the heavenly Kingdom. The ceiling painted with stars on a blue background invited one to consider this place as a microcosm: the history of salvation depicted and celebrated here had cosmic dimensions. This temple-model emphasizes the human *necessity* of separating specific sacred spaces from the rest of the world, not in order to hide from the world, but in order to understand it better (as *heterotopia*) and to provide it with a vision or a horizon (as *utopia*).

The danger of both tent- and temple-models, but particularly the latter, is idolatry, even though the intention of tent and temple is to be a *privileged* place of encounter and not a *literal* dwelling place of God different from the rest of the universe. "Israel could feel itself so sure of the immanent presence of Yahweh that it forgot his transcendent lordship."[27] This is an important thought: uniformity and centralization as an inadequate appropriation of transcendence leads to a loss of mystery. Plurality and diversity *must* therefore be part of postmodern church architecture. This is not merely a sociological fact; it is a theological necessity. The self-evident claims put on Yahweh are direct causes of the prophetic criticisms against the institutional Temple. This is why the prophet Nathan preferred the mobility and simplicity of the tabernacle to the established Temple (2 Sm 7). Nathan's criticism is a theological statement, neither criticizing the cult, nor merely the earthly temple, but the temple as the appropriation of God's immanence, overlooking that God's dwelling was in the heavens (Hos 5:15; Dt 26:15).[28] Turner remarks that there is no equal in history of Israel's prophetic self-criticism concerning the Temple, combined with loyalty (Ps 84, 23, 27, 65, 122, 134).[29] With Nathan, God changes the focus from a sacred place to a holy people (Jer 3:16–17; Ez 36:16–38): instead of David building a house for God, God will build a house (family or dynasty) for David. Even Solomon exclaims: "If the heavens and the highest heavens cannot contain you, how much less this temple which I have built." (1 KGS 8:27) Therefore,

available to man, but of 'replacing' it by a sort of magic copy in complete conformity with it, which implies a Luciferian confusion between the material form and the ideal or 'abstract' form." Titus Burckhardt, *Sacred Art in East and West* (Bedfont: Perennial Books, 1967), 32–33.

26 Post, *Tussen*, 71–72.

27 Ibid., 66.

28 Ibid., 74.

29 Ibid., 68.

even though we are in need of expressing materially separated places of divine encounter, it is essential, in order to counter idolatric tendencies, to remain conscious of the dynamic tent model, in which God can be encountered everywhere, even in the most undomesticated wilderness and the most adversary exile. Also the temple-model can be perceived in *Christ the Light Cathedral* in Oakland (Fig. 0.2), as well as in the *Cathedral of the Resurrection* in Évry (Fig. 0.1). Interestingly, *Herz Jesu* in München-Neuhausen (Fig. 1.3) might as well be more a temple- than a tent- or ecclesiamodel. I will explore this further on.

The ecclesia-model. Although it has roots in the First Testament, particularly in the prophetic warning against idolatry (Ez 10:4-5.18-19; 11:22-23), the third model is a radically new understanding of holy place revealed in Christ. Using the same terminology of Jacob's theophany, Christ promises that, there where two or three are gathered in his Name (Mt 18:20), we will "see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man." (Jn 1:51) Whereas in the First Testament, divine encounter was tied to places, since the New Testament it is intimately tied to the person of Christ as the Face and Name of God. Places are still important in the New Testament, but only insofar as they are related to the incarnated Logos and his actions. The Kingdom that Jesus proclaimed was to be a *lived space* of peace and justice

FIGURE 1.3 Herz Jesu, *München-Neuhausen, Germany* (*Allmann, Scattler, Wappner, 2000*). Eucharistic celebration on Saturday, August 25, 2012

for everyone. Jesus had nowhere to lay his head (Mt 8:20), and in prophetically proclaiming the destruction and restoration of the temple in three days (Jn 2:19), he was faithful to the dynamic tent-model of sacred space, but only in order to highlight its being a *lived space* of indwelling and encounter: instead of Mount Gerizim and Jerusalem, God can from now on be encountered everywhere in spirit and truth (Jn 4:20-24). Just before dying as Christ's first witness, Stephen recalls the inadequacy of both tent and temple, exclaiming: "Yet the Most High does not dwell in houses made with hands." (Act 7:44-48) Now, filled with the Holy Spirit, he sees the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God (Act 7:55). At this very location, not unlike Jacob's vision, a sacred space opens for him, in which he encounters the Father, through Christ, in the Spirit. The young Saul who had witnessed the stoning of Stephen would at a later stage in his life proclaim that "the Lord of heaven and earth does not dwell in sanctuaries made by human hands." (Act 17:24) The architectural model that corresponds to this type is the *domus ecclesiae*, the house of gathering. This model also has roots in the Jewish diaspora: Louis Bouyer, Harold W. Turner, and Kevin Seasoltz among others, indicate the importance of *synagogues* as non-sacrificial gathering places and especially *private homes* as places of worship in addition to tabernacle and temple.[30] This *ecclesia*-model is difficult to find in huge, vast cathedrals as Évry (Fig. 0.1) and Oakland (Fig. 0.2), and better represented by small parish churches as *St Laurentius* (Fig. 2.2), *St Peter Canisius* (Fig. 2.5), and the *Chapel of St Ignatius* (Figs. 3.6–3.8), to name only a few.

In conclusion, this threefold typology of Biblical sacred space is the adequate response to contemporary reductions to only one model, whether *domus Dei* or *domus ecclesiae*. The danger of the first option is idolatry, whereas the second tends to obliterate the transcendent dimension, and to overlook the role of the building as a 'machine for contemplation' outside of liturgical gatherings. The most important implication for my research is that a theology of church architecture should not be based on a study of the temple or *domus Dei* alone without a *domus Dei*-dimension, churches would lapse into Arianism, and without a *domus ecclesiae*-dimension, they would fall into Apollinarism.[31]

30 Louis Bouyer, *Liturgy and Architecture* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1967). Seasoltz sums up five places with a religious significance for the dispersed Jews of the First Testament: the temple in Jerusalem, synagogues, outdoors (in particular the desert), homes, and monuments. The reason for gathering had changed: "Whereas the Jews originally had assembled in the temple because it was a sacred edifice, the dispersed Jews would have constructed synagogues because they sought to be united as God's chosen people." Seasoltz, *Sense*, 78–79.

31 Turner, Temple, 339. Arianism is a Christian heresy named after the priest Arius of Alexandria (+330), who argued that Christ was subordinate to the Father, a lesser God.

Church architecture and the liturgy of the twentieth century placed a new and fortunate emphasis on the gathering, whose material expression tended towards iconoclasm. I believe that the time is ripe for a new symbolism, on the solid ground of a preliminary sacred emptiness. Today, there is a sensible recovery of the contemplative and transcendent values of a *domus Dei*, but the value of encountering God in community (immanence) should not be discarded. For instance, his work on the history of religions led Eliade to define three archetypal functions of sacred space: *communion* with the divine, represented by a religious symbol (altar, pillar, statue); manifestation of divine *power* (salvation, healing, illumination); and *mirror* of or orientation towards an ideal place.[32] Remarkably, these are all dimensions of transcendence. Drawing on the acquisitions of the twentieth-century *domus ecclesiae*, we might add a more immanent dimension of *community building*.

Transfered into theology, it is possible to recognize a Trinitarian and ecclesiological reading of these anthropological functions: the first is *Christological*, centered on the Eucharist, architecturally expressed by the altar-table, which gathers the Body of Christ into communion. The second is *pneumatological*, emphasizing the Temple of the Spirit, architecturally expressed by expansive space and embracing light. The third is *eschatological*, orienting the People of God to the eternal banquet of justice and peace in God's Kingdom, architecturally expressed by an axial directionality beyond the physical space. Corresponding to these functions, the early Christian basilica was a *center* of communion of the gathered Body of Christ with God and among one another, its axial way-form symbolized a *way* of life oriented to the altar-table, and as a whole it represented the Kingdom or the *heavenly Jerusalem*.[33] I will apply this Trinitarian and ecclesiological framework especially to one of my case studies in Chapter 5. After this first, biblical approach to a *Spiritus loci*, let us now turn to a patristic source.

Patristic Foundations. Mystagogic space

The nave is the *sanctuary in potency*
by being consecrated to the *end* of the *mystagogy*,

Christ would not share the full divinity of the Father. Apollinarism is a Christian heresy named after Apollinaris of Laodicea (+390), who argued that Christ did not have a human soul. Christ would not share our full humanity.

32 Mircea Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion*, trans. Willard R. Trask (New York: Harper & Row, 1961), 20–67; *Patterns in Comparative Religion* (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1958), 367–387.

33 Seasoltz, *Sense*, 99.

and in turn the sanctuary is the *nave in act*
by possessing the *principle* of the *mystagogy*.
MAXIMUS THE CONFESSOR[34]

The *Mystagogy* of Maximus the Confessor (580–662) is the first document (written between 628 and 638) in which a church building is interpreted as *mystagogic space*, that is, a visible symbol leading into the divine Mystery by emphasizing the perspective of the assembly.[35] The treatise's full title is *The Church's Mystagogy, in which are explained the symbolism of certain rites performed in the divine synaxis*. This relatively small essay is one of the first commentaries on the Eucharistic celebration (*synaxis*) and consists of an introduction and twenty-four chapters. Its theology can be situated within the Christological quarrels concerning the paradoxical dogma of Chalcedon (451), which is the hermeneutical key to the whole essay.[36]

Of particular interest for my research is that Maximus not merely describes the symbolism of the Eucharistic rites (Chapters 8–24), as announced by the subtitle, but explicitly *situates them within their architectural context* as a *compositio loci* (*infra*) (Chapters 1–7), so as to highlight the inherent symbolism of the *ekklesia* (as gathering and as building). Maximus treats the rites as movements and actions that *take place somewhere*. Church building and liturgical rites belong together. The mystagogic meaning of a church comes to the fore when liturgically performed by a worshiping community. Hence, *mystagogic space* is meant to be *Eucharistic space*.

It is noteworthy that Maximus does not mention the *ministerial* rites concerning the altar-table, such as the censing rite and the anaphora, in sharp contrast to Dionysius the Areopagite's *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*, from whom he explicitly distinguishes himself.[37] This absence suggests that Maximus is not

34 Maximus the Confessor, "The Church's Mystagogy," in *Selected Writings*, trans. George C. Berthold, The Classics of Western Spirituality (New York, Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1985), 181–225 (PG 91, 658-717D), at 195 [681D]. Translation altered, emphasis added.

35 In this section, I draw on the excellent introduction of Marie-Lucie Charpin-Ploix in Maxime le Confesseur, *La Mystagogie*, trans. Marie-Lucie Charpin-Ploix, Les Pères dans la foi 92 (Paris: Migne, 2005), 9–69.

36 Although in his *Mystagogy* Maximus does not refer explicitly to this Christological dogma, its statement that Christ is "acknowledged in two natures which undergo no confusion, no change, no division, no separation" is at the background of all his ecclesiological, exegetical, moral, anthropological, and cosmological reflections, as if Christ were the key to unlock all mysteries.

37 Maximus, 184 [661A]. Dionysius only gives rare allusions to the architecture, mentioning only the altar, the doors in the nave to exclude the uninitiated, and doors at the

interested in the point of view of the clergy but rather in that of the assembly gathered in the nave, leaving unsaid what remains hidden behind the veil. He writes his treatise as it would be understood by the faithful, in order to introduce them into the mystery that is celebrated at the Eucharistic synaxis. This is also my own purpose in this book, in order to provide a worshiping assembly with a theological understanding of their building.

The Church as Image of God. The first chapter states how the Church is an image and figure of *God*, who "binds both intelligible and sensible beings to Godself and to one another."[38] The essential point is *God's activity of uniting* all beings into "a common and unconfused identity of movement and existence."[39] In a similar way, by regeneration in the Spirit, the Church unites different people into one Body of Christ without confusion, held together by indivisible and unique faith. Between the lines, the Christological principle of Chalcedon becomes visible. The archetypal model for the Church is Godself as a uniting Being who respects difference. Maximus uses the same term for unity (*hen*) as the intra- and extra-Trinitarian unity in Jn 17:21-23. This uniting power is the divine relationship that holds all differences together in the rest of the treatise.[40]

The Church as Image of the World. In Chapter 2, Maximus explicitly turns to the church building in order to demonstrate the Church as image and figure of the *world*, which "contains both unity and diversity":

> For while it is one house in its construction it admits of a certain diversity in the disposition of its plan by being divided into an area exclusively assigned to priests and ministers, which we call a sanctuary, and one accessible to all the faithful, which we call a nave. Still, it is one in its basic reality (*hypostasis*) without being divided into its parts by reason of the differences between them, but rather by their relationship to the unity (*hen*) it frees these parts from the difference arising from their names. It shows to each other that they are both the same thing, and reveals that one is to the other in turn what each one is for itself.[41]

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sanctuary. He writes from the ministerial point of view of the "divine hierarch" performing the rites, who "generously hands down to his inferiors that unique hierarchic understanding which is especially his own. He resorts to a multitude of sacred enigmas. Then, freely and untrammeled by anything beneath him, he returns to his own starting point without having any loss." Pseudo-Dionysius, "The Ecclesiastical Hierarchy," in *The Complete Works*, trans. Colm Luibheid, The Classics of Western Spirituality (New York, Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1987), 193–260, 213 [429B].

38 Maximus, 186 [664 D]. Translation altered.

39 Ibid., 186 [665 A].

40 Charpin-Ploix, 87 n 38.

41 Maximus, 195 [681 D].

Rather than searching for exterior signs of 'churchliness' (McNamara), Maximus defines a church by its distinction between sanctuary and nave. But instead of separating them, he defines the one by the other:

> The nave is the *sanctuary in potency* by being consecrated by the relationship to the *end* of the initiation into the mystery (*mystagogia*), and in turn the sanctuary is the *nave in act* by possessing the *principle* of the initiation into the mystery (*mystagogia*), which remains one and the same in its two parts.[42]

This is the central part of Maximus' thought from the point of view of church architecture. Nave and sanctuary belong together. On the one hand, the nave has no sense without initiation into the mystery: the nave must be *mystagogic space*, leading into the mystery of Eucharistic dance and eschatological garden, where God and humanity are united. On the other hand, the sanctuary has no sense if it is not a nave, that is, if it is not meant for the assembly. The *distinction* between sanctuary and nave is important as well as their *union*, albeit without separation and without confusion.

In the next chapters, Maximus applies this spatial distinction as a metaphor to explain anthropological, moral, exegetical, ecclesiological, and cosmological realities.[43] For Maximus, a church is *mystagogic space*:

> By means of the nave, representing the body, [the church] proposes moral wisdom, while by means of the sanctuary, representing the soul, it spiritually interprets natural contemplation, and by means of the mind of the divine altar it manifests mystical theology. [...] Whoever has been

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42 Ibid., Translation altered, emphasis added. This is one of the rare times Maximus uses the term *mystagogia*. Ibid., 217 n33.

43 Sanctuary and nave relate within a church like the invisible and the visible realms within the *universe* (Chap. 2), like heaven and earth within the visible *world* (Chap. 3), like the spirit and the letter within *Scripture* (Chap. 6), like soul and body within a *human being* (Chaps. 4, 7), and even like contemplative intellect (*nous*) – which allegorically corresponds to the altar – and practical reason (*logos*) within the *soul* (Chap. 5). In the occasional allusions to architecture when discussing the Eucharistic rites in chapters eight through twenty-four, Maximus does not differ much from Dionysius. As such, the rite of *entrance* of people and priest together is a symbol of humanity entering with Christ into virtuous life. The rite of *descending* the throne after the proclamation of the Gospel is a symbol of Christ's second coming at the end of time. The closing of doors made the nave into a sanctuary (in a time when the sacred is defined by separation). Maximus, 199, 201 [689 B, 693 A].

> fortunate enough to have been prudently and wisely initiated into what is accomplished in church has rendered his soul divine and a veritable church of God. It is perhaps for this reason that the church made by human hands which is its symbolic copy because of the variety of divine things which are in it has been given to us for our guidance toward the highest good.[44]

The interpretation of the soul as church of God, which has its origins in the Pauline writings (1 Co 3:16), is in mystical literature a favorite image for the mystical union with God. For instance, the 13th-century Flemish mystic Ida of Louvain

> saw her own soul as a grand temple, which extended more and more so that its wide dimensions [...] resembled that of a splendid church. She could see it from within and while she was observing sharply and with amazement all its wondrous details, reflecting that she had never seen something as beautiful as this, she looked at the altar because it seemed the most beautiful of all. [...] She could see the priest coming to the altar, dressed in the solemn liturgical vestments. [...] This priest was the only and most high Priest, after the order of Melchizedek, Jesus Christ, perfect God and man, born from the virgin Mary.[45]

Worth mentioning for the analogy between church and soul is also the anonymous "The Temple of Our Soul." Again, the altar occupies a central role:

> The exterior temple is made for this inner temple. Everything that is disposed in it has no purpose other than to come to this inner temple, and all that is celebrated in it has no aim other than to be perfected in this inner temple. The exterior temple is made by human hands; this one by the hands of the eternal Wisdom. That one is of inert stone; this one of rational, living stones and founded on the immovable mountain of the Divinity and the unfaltering rock that is Christ; it is protected by the heavenly spirits whom he has set as strong guards of these walls. [...] The organ in the external temple, and all the instruments, are

44 Ibid., 190, 195 [672 B, 681 D]. Translation altered. Prudence is a fruit of reason and wisdom a fruit of the intellect.

45 Anonymous, *Vita Idae de Lovanio*, II, 34 (*Acta Sanctorum aprilis* 2, col. 180C–D), trans. Robert Faesen, and quoted in *Late Medieval Mysticism of the Low Countries*, ed. Rik Van Nieuwenhove, Robert Faesen, and Helen Rolfson, The Classics of Western Spirituality (New York, Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 2008), 323.

> played by human art, but in this one the Holy Trinity plays the organ of the soul, where the heavenly master of love brings about his praise, with the sweetest melody in the innermost part of the soul.[46]

One enters a church in order to enter the Mystery. A church is *mystagogic space* when it is the visible symbol of invisible inhabitation, the most intimate union with God. One basic architectural feature, the distinctive union between sanctuary and nave, is enough for Maximus to lay bare the mystagogic dynamism of a space. Noteworthy is Maximus' understanding of architecture as spatial dynamics.

It would be anachronistic to deduce clear parallels with Western church architecture in the twenty-first century, because Maximus' archetypal church must have looked like a Syrian church, perhaps with a *bema* in the middle of the nave, holding an ambo and a lectern. The longitudinal nave would have been oriented towards the sanctuary with an elevated throne and where the altar could be hidden behind a veil.

For contemporary church architecture, reading Maximus does not suggest a return to a hidden sanctuary and a longitudinal orientation of the nave. Maximus points out that only when sanctuary (a place defined by the altar) and nave (a place defined by the assembly) relate as a division-in-union modeled upon the Christological principle of Chalcedon, a church functions as mystagogic symbol for mystical union.

For instance, I wonder whether the traditional basilical plan, as was opted for in the *Herz Jesu Kirche* in München-Neuhausen (2000), is adapted today to honor Maximus' deep chalcedonian insight concerning church architecture (Fig. 1.3). At first sight, it does correspond materially, for there is a 'nave' for the assembly oriented towards the 'sanctuary' reserved for ordained ministers – even though architecturally there is but one space. Nevertheless, a static liturgy tends to transform this distinction into a *separation*, in which there is no contact at all between the two spaces but the procession at communion. Hence, only one space will be effectively *lived space*, reducing the other to passivity. The essential point of Maximus is to honor the sanctuary as a "nave in act" and the nave as a "sanctuary in potency." This means to honor the *uniting relationship*, which was Maximus' starting point. Here, we can refer to Kieckhefer's suggestion for kinetic dynamism, augmenting processional space

46 Anonymous, "The Temple of Our Soul" ("Die oeffeningen vanden tempel onser sielen"), partially translated by Robert Faesen in *Late Medieval Mysticism of the Low Countries*, ed. Rik Van Nieuwenhove, Robert Faesen, and Helen Rolfson, The Classics of Western Spirituality (New York, Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 2008), 323–348, I, 15, 327; VIII, 5–7, 329.

that includes the assembly (*infra*) The question today is how the sacred potency of the nave can be made manifest in a time when sacredness is not so much defined by separation as by presence and association (in the words of Kieckhefer).

In *Herz Jesu*, even the sacred character of the sanctuary is in question, because of its bland minimalism, that has nothing of the rich symbolism of sacred emptiness (*infra*). Its entire square sanctuary wall depicts a huge cross of glory without a Name or a Face. The main architectural symbolism of *Herz Jesu* is the open doors at feast days, symbolizing a hospitable church. Near the entrance is an intimate devotional church around a polychrome statue of the Virgin. The way of the cross is relegated to the ambulatory, and the five 'wounds' in the floor are poor conceptual reminders of *mental space* (*Lefebvre*) added representational decoration rather than ornamental symbolism. *Herz Jesu* is not only poor in *synaesthetic* and *Eucharistic space*, but in *kerygmatic space* as well.

In conclusion, Maximus' *Mystagogy* suggests the interpretation of church architecture from the point of view of a worshiping assembly. Out of one material limit between sanctuary and nave, Maximus introduces the mystery of mystical union with God as a paradoxical union-in-diversity. Maximus was concerned to bring to light the mystagogic *interrelatedness* between sanctuary and nave (and the correlated ecclesiological, cosmological, exegetical, and anthropological analogies) as the uniting power of the Church, which she receives from God. His following reflections demonstrate that this kerygmatic interrelatedness comes to the fore only within the liturgical *actions* of a worshiping community (*Eucharistic space*). Maximus' initiation into the mystery moved from an exterior concern to interiority, from architecture to spirituality. I paraphrase him in saying that matter is spiritual in potency (sacramental), and the spirit material in act (incarnational). Let us now turn to an Ignatian approach to the *Spiritus loci*.

Ignatian Foundations. Compositio loci

> We cannot say who we are
> without saying where we are.
>
> JEAN-YVES LACOSTE[47]

A church building can be understood as the *libretto* for an opera. It is in these terms that the French Jesuit scholar Michel de Certeau understood the *Spiritual*

47 Jean-Yves Lacoste, *Experience and the Absolute: Disputed Questions on the Humanity of Man*, trans. Mark Raftery-Skehan, ed. John D. Caputo, Perspectives in Continental Philosophy (New York: Fordham, 2004), 39.

Exercises of Saint Ignatius of Loyola.[48] Just as in the Exercises, the essential part of church architecture lies *outside* the material 'text'. The libretto requires the existence and movement of a community of 'desirers' to provide music, dialogue, and action. The libretto of the Exercises guides the retreatant "*out of the place where he stands* at the outset *to a place of greater truth*, by means of an elucidation that is carried out in terms of actual practices. It *organizes the places* proportionate to a retreatant's voyage. It provides *landmarks*, not a full account of the voyage."[49] This *spatiality* of the Exercises is curiously based on a 'non-place', the *Principle and Foundation* set apart before the actual itinerary.

Each of the case studies in this book could be understood as what Saint Ignatius called a *compositio loci*, a composition of the place, but understanding its genitive in a double sense, not only the place as composed by the dweller, *but vice versa as well.* Without a community of 'desirers' the place does not come alive. Does the place orient towards the articulation of the community's voices of desire? Does the architecture as a 'discourse of places' offer landmarks that lead the desirers out of the place where they stand into 'a place of greater truth'? I suggest that the utopic 'non-place' on which such a spiritual itinerary is based can be called *Spiritus loci*. It is only gradually, by travelling this itinerary that the *Spiritus loci* as God-space will reveal her Name and her Face, but at the end, we will arrive where we started, and know the place for the first time, because we will recognize its promising space.

In Ignatius' Exercises, the preparatory exercise of *compositio loci* consists of seeing, with the help of the imagination (*con la vista de la imaginación*), the material place where a Gospel passage occurred or a virtual place that can help consider an invisible truth (such as sin, incarnation, or salvation).[50] The purpose of this prelude, which has often wrongly been dismissed as of

48 Michel de Certeau, "L'espace du désir ou le fondement des Exercices," *Christus* 77 (1973): 118–128 ["The Space of Desire," trans. Michelle Suderman. *Artes de México* 70 (2004): 93–96, at 93]. Ignatius of Loyola merely provides order, form, and a way to proceed, which do not anticipate, substitute, describe, justify, nor express the *experiences* exterior to the text. Also Henri Lefebvre points out the analogy of reading aloud an architectural space as written text to become a theatrical *space of representation,* that is, a stage to represent a play (*infra*).

49 Certeau, 93. My emphasis.

50 "It should be noted here that for contemplation or meditation *about visible things*, for example a contemplation on Christ our Lord (who is visible), the 'composition' will consist in seeing *through the gaze of the imagination the material place* where the object I want to contemplate is situated. By 'material place' I mean for example a temple or a mountain where Jesus Christ or our Lady is to be found – according to what I want to

secondary importance, is to put things *in context*, in order to better achieve the goal, that is, deeper encounter with oneself and/or the person contemplated. The mystery to be contemplated must *be placed*, even though the place will never be the center of gravity of the meditation. In Ignatius' descriptions, this context is always crudely *physical*, even when meditating on invisible truths. The focus in a *compositio loci* as part of a spiritual exercise is never the place as such, but the relationship and encounter with a person.[51]

Aware that it stretches the initial aim, I would like to use this expression, *compositio loci*, and its purpose, for the topic at hand: contemporary church architecture. Church building is indeed a particular 'composition of place' with the aim of creating space for an encounter – as stated in the subtitle of a recent article on the subject, which promotes the *compositio loci* as "an essential component of personal encounter with Jesus."[52]

In one sense, following the *objective* genitive of *compositio loci*, approaching a church also involves the imagination, although the material place is directly at hand, and might even be an obstacle for the imagination. I will argue that the imagination is especially needed for its *synthetic* or *synaesthetic* work in bringing together all the senses, letting 'another space' emerge within the place, in order to avoid architecture being reduced to a *visual* art alone. I argue that the non-representative and atmospheric character of tridimensional architecture is even an advantage to bidimensional and representative pictures, which might be a hindrance to being present at the scene or might merely provoke aesthetic appreciation.[53] As such, architecture works less than

contemplate. *Where the object is an invisible one*, as is the case in the present meditation on sins, the composition will be to see *with the gaze of the imagination*, and to consider, that my soul is *imprisoned in this body* which will one day disintegrate, and also my whole composite self (by this I mean the soul joined with the body), as if *exiled in this valley* among brute beasts." [SpEx 47] Trans. Michael Ivens (Leominster: Gracewing, 2004). My emphasis.

51 This is well demonstrated in the 'colloquy' as the postlude of each spiritual exercise, in which Ignatius invites the retreatant to speak with God "as one friend speaks with another." [SpEx 54].

52 Nicolas Standaert, "The Composition of Place: Creating Space for an Encounter," *The Way* 46/1 (January 2007): 7–20, at 19.

53 Standaert, 13. The author refers to the engravings of Gospel scenes as visual aids to the Spiritual Exercises in Jerónimo Nadal, *Adnotationes et meditationes in Evangelia* (Antwerp: 1595). A particularly refined solution was found in the inclusion of lettering through which the retreatant could move from text to picture. This spatial interaction created space for an encounter. The added dynamism and movement allowed the retreatant to become present to the mystery contemplated.

representational art with the *representative* imagination. I suggest that architecture addresses the *transcendental* imagination, the one that makes possible an image, more than the *empirical*, which "restores on the plane of representation a degree of the density and warmth of presence."[54] As in the case of the Ignatian Exercises, the imagination never serves to fantasize a fancy world disparate from this one, but as an aid *to reach more reality*: the earliest of commentators emphasize that the aim of the *compositio* is to become oneself present to the place (*como presente en el lugar*), because the mystery contemplated is itself *already* utterly present to her or him.[55] This leads one early commentator to say: "In the composition of place, the one meditating should make [herself] himself present in the mystery as though it were done for [her] him alone."[56] For the case of architecture, a *compositio loci*, that is, a phenomenological moment of contemplating the place one is in, has also this aspect of one's own presence. Perceiving the place has the correlate effect of perceiving oneself in the place. A *compositio loci* in this sense also makes oneself more present. This already introduces the next aspect concerning the influence of the building.

In another sense, also building on Ignatius' original aim, the *compositio loci* might be interpreted as a *subjective* genitive: the place 'composes' the perceiver. Indeed, many phenomenologists point out the capacity of a building to bring the visitor into a totally different mood, similar to the effect of music.[57] In Ignatius' purpose, the retreatant has to compose a place in the imagination; in the case of church architecture, the place is already composed before, or better around, one's senses. Moreover, one often has the experience of 'being composed' by the place. After all, it might not be so far from Ignatius' purposes, because the *compositio* "also opens up the way for the *repositioning* of oneself."[58]

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54 "Under its transcendental aspect, the imagination allows the given to arise, but as empirical, it restores on the plane of representation a degree of the density and warmth of presence." Mikel Dufrenne, *Phénoménologie de l'expérience esthétique* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, [2]1967 (1953)), 438. Henceforth, PEE. [*The Phenomenology of Aesthetic Experience*, trans. Edward S. Casey, Albert A. Anderson, Willis Domingo, Leon Jacobson (Evanston, IL: Northwestern, 1973), 350–351. Henceforth, PAE].

55 Standaert, 9–10.

56 Gil González Dávila, Dir 31:161, as quoted in Standaert, 9. See *On Giving the Spiritual Exercises: The Early Jesuit Manuscript Directories and the Official Directory of 1599*, ed. Martin E. Palmer (St Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1996).

57 Gernot Böhme, *Atmosphäre: Essays zur neuen Ästhetik* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1995).

58 Standaert, 20. Emphasis original.

The Ignatian *compositio loci* is 'preliminary' not in the sense of a *superfluous* stage once deeper dimensions are reached, but one to set up and never quit as a permanent context for the exercise. As this prelude is not called *compositio personae*, place must be of importance. Nevertheless, it is preliminary in the sense of a *provisional* approach that must be deepened, as the focus resides on an encounter and not on the place as such:

> The encounter is not simply the product of my imagining or the projection of a personal emotion; it is a coming up against an irreducible other, a definite historical person. [...] Jesus is present for us here and now, and it is this meeting with him which establishes our own personhood, the second dimension of the personal encounter that is our concern here.[59]

In conclusion, for a theotopy it is essential to perceive how one is 'composed' or 'repositioned' by a certain place. Hence, the more the atmosphere evokes strangeness at the same time as recognition, such as in the *Dominican chapel* in Louvain-la-Neuve (Fig. 1.1), the more limits create space and the more such a space is truly mystagogic. After having laid bare *what* theotopy can be, let us know proceed in analyzing *why* two disciplines as far apart as theology and architecture are in reality profoundly intertwined in the case of church architecture.

Why? The Intertwining of Theology and Architecture

> To be human is to be placed, to exist in relation to physical structures, both to shape them and to be shaped by them.
>
> TIMOTHY GORRINGE[60]

What is the relationship, if any, between theology and architecture? Can theology be interested in *places*? Should theology not focus on *persons* instead? In recent times, scholars point out the lacuna of space in theological thought in favor of the category of time. They urge for a "spatial turn" in theology similar to that of the social sciences, "to become aware of its embeddedness in the

59 Ibid., 17.

60 Timothy Gorringe, "Preface," in *Theology in Built Environments: Exploring Religion, Architecture, and Design*, ed. Sigurd Bergmann (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 2009), 7.

existential spatiality of life."[61] The theological study of the built environment allows one to go "beyond doctrines of the church, its ministry, sacraments and worship, beyond even theological accounts of work, of matter, and of art" and develop a genuine "theology of *space*":

> We need a theology of space itself, as a basic category or dimension of human existence with the most immediate relevance to a spatial structure such as a church. [...F]or Christians the incarnation was a spatial and geographical event as much as it was temporal and historical, and the Church itself exists likewise in both dimensions.[62]

The epistemological question at the basis of this book is how two disciplines as far apart as architecture and theology can be brought together in a correlation; or better, how their intrinsic correlation can become manifest. At first glance, they do not seem as intimately related as I claim they are. On the one hand, architecture builds with 'dead' matter, creating in best cases functional and aesthetic spaces to dwell in. The built environment in general does not attract attention to itself, being the backdrop of our lives, to which we are indifferent generally. On the other hand, theology speaks with words about (our relationship with) God. Moreover, Christian theology holds that God's presence is not bound to specific places. So, how on earth are these disciplines related? For the renowned American Benedictine scholar Kevin Seasoltz (1930–2013), architectural symbols can be junctions wherein God and humans discover one another and engage in a relationship: "Architecture functions as a *locus theologicus*." The German theologian Sigurd Bergmann goes further: "Architecture is regarded, not only as a *locus theologicus* but as an autonomous agent of theology itself."[63] In this line, I will look with Bergmann at a theology of prepositions and conjunctions, and subsequently, the American Methodist theologian Susan J. White will facilitate a clear view on the possibility and necessity of a theology of sacred space in particular.

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61 Sigurd Bergmann, "God's Here and Now in Built Environments: Introductory Remarks on Architecture as Theology," in *Theology in Built Environments: Exploring Religion, Architecture, and Design*, ed. Sigurd Bergmann (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 2009), 9–22, at 13.

62 Harold W. Turner, *From Temple to Meeting House: The Phenomenology and Theology of Places of Worship* (The Hague: Mouton, 1979), 6.

63 R. Kevin Seasoltz, *A Sense of the Sacred: Theological Foundations of Christian Architecture and Art* (New York: Continuum, 2005), 345; Bergmann, *Here*, 20.

Spatial Turn. A Theology of Prepositions and Conjunctions

> The challenge to a contextual theology to come is exploring the synaesthetic quality of doing theology in such a way. How is music related to scripture? How does the cathedral's magnificent inner space interact with choirs walking and singing in its complex architecture? How is preaching affected by liturgical space? What does, on the one hand, a baroque church, and on the other hand, a Calvinist minimalist room do to our images of God? What could discursive theology learn from 'theology built in stone, wood and glass'?
>
> SIGURD BERGMANN[64]

Because theology is interested in persons and their encounter, the physical and mystical space of encounter is essential.[65] Theology is interested in architecture because of the persons using it. Church architecture might well teach us something essential about space in order to understand the built environment in general. In his introduction to one of the recent interdisciplinary and multi-authored works on theology and architecture, the German theologian Sigurd Bergmann focuses captivatingly on prepositions and conjunctions that "sneak about in between the big houses of substantives and the roads of

64 Bergmann, *Here*, 11.

65 In this book, the term *mystical* refers to the encounter between human beings and God as described in the mystical tradition. Hence, I propose *mystical space* (or *Godspace*) tentatively as another term for the Holy Spirit, if agreed upon the fact that such an encounter, on Biblical grounds, occurs *in the Spirit*: "Life in the Holy Spirit fulfills the vocation of human being." (CCC 1699) "Grace is a participation in the life of God. It introduces us into the intimacy of Trinitarian life: by Baptism the Christian participates in the grace of Christ, the Head of his Body. As an "adopted son" he can henceforth call God "Father," in union with the only Son. He receives the life of the Spirit who breathes charity into him and who forms the Church. […] The grace of Christ is the gratuitous gift that God makes to us of his own life, infused by the Holy Spirit into our soul to heal it of sin and to sanctify it. […] Grace is first and foremost the gift of the Spirit who justifies and sanctifies us." (CCC 1997, 1999, 2003) "In every liturgical action the Holy Spirit is sent in order to bring us into communion with Christ and so to form his Body. The Holy Spirit is like the sap of the Father's vine which bears fruit on its branches (Jn 15:1-17; Ga 5:22). The most intimate cooperation of the Holy Spirit and the Church is achieved in the liturgy. The Spirit who is the Spirit of communion, abides indefectibly in the Church. For this reason the Church is the great sacrament of divine communion which gathers God's scattered children together. Communion with the Holy Trinity and fraternal communion are inseparably the fruit of the Spirit in the liturgy (Jn 1:3–7)." (CCC 1108)

verbs."[66] Indeed, these "tricky small words" have the grammatical capacity to establish *spatial* relations that prove to have profound theological weight. For instance, is it more appropriate to speak of theology *of*, *for*, *in* architecture, architecture *as* theology, or simply architecture *and* theology?

Perhaps the most evident way to describe this complex correlation is to speak of a theology *of* architecture. However, this might still suggest a merely exterior view upon architecture as something distant and objectified. In this case, architecture is not respected as a source for theology. Moreover, instead of a healthy distinction, the 'of' maintains a *separation* between both disciplines. The same objection could be raised to a theology *for* architecture. This expression might suggest a theological reflection forged in advance and without any relationship to architecture. As an alternative, theology *in* architecture might respect the environment as a source for thought: "Doing theology in space and at a place implies acknowledging an intrinsic value and an autonomous significance of the surroundings as an integral dimension of theology itself."[67] However, it is not clear how the tendency to see space as a mere container is countered with this expression. In its place, architecture *as* theology tends to *confuse* the genres. Obviously, architecture is neither a verbal nor a conceptual discipline. Nevertheless, it expresses something of our relationship with God.

Bergmann goes as far as to ask for the criteria "between the place of divine presence and the place of divine absence."[68] In my view, this is not the right question. To understand the built environment as *vestigia Dei* risks identifying God with the building. It is not architecture's task to define and delimit God. In this sense, architecture is a different, non-verbal kind of theology, *implicitly* reflective but ever in need of the interpretive word. I suggest using the term "theotopy" in order to lay bare this distinction with conceptual theology. It is then possible to speak of architecture as theotopy, being aware of the above limitation.

In conclusion, none of the above expressions satisfactorily bridges the existential gap between theology *and* architecture.[69] Perhaps the '*and*' keeps

66 Bergmann, *Here*, 9.

67 Ibid., 11.

68 Ibid., 10.

69 Therefore, Bergmann coins the term "theo-oiko-domia" to suggest the building of God's place. One might wonder if such a heavy word is indeed able to clarify the debate. On the one hand, I do not agree with Bergmann's tendency (albeit tempered) to attribute to architecture reflection on God's *essence* rather than on God's *relationship* with us and to place architects *on a par with* theologians, instead of their partners. On the other hand, I entirely agree with his insistence to understand the built environment as source for theology instead of being a mere container.

both disciplines united and distinguished as modeled upon Chalcedon.[70] Nonetheless, all the above "tricky small words" paint this correlation in their own color and shed light on its two-way dialectic at the basis of my interdisciplinary approach. Instead of choosing exclusively for one of them, it will be important to bring all of them into play.[71]

Theological Turn. Possibility of a Theology of Architecture

> In the act by which it subverts the topological, liturgy suggests a redefinition of place: no longer is it to be thought of as a being-there but as being-toward.
>
> Not even the most beautiful architecture can summon up a presence.
>
> JEAN-YVES LACOSTE[72]

Drawing on Martin Luther's emphasis on the event rather than on the building, the German theologian Horst Schwebel rules out the possibility of a theology of church architecture because "church buildings are no *medium salutis*." Hence, "the shape of the building is irrelevant for human salvation and for the relationship with God."[73] In contrast, another German theologian, Matthias D. Wüthrich argues that such a resistance to attribute sacredness to a building is based on the (unfortunate) concept of space as *container*, and suggests considering a *relational* concept of space, similar to what the sociologist Martina Löw had suggested.[74] Likewise, in "Can We Talk about a Theology of Sacred Space?"

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70 I refer here to the well-known Christological determination "union without confusion, distinction without separation" of the Council of Chalcedon. That such an expression can be used theologically outside of Christology has been made possible since Maximus the Confessor, (*supra*).

71 'Interdisciplinary' is not just a nice word for a bland juxtaposition of apples and eggs, but a still life that really deserves this name: in its stillness it is but life that speaks and sparkles. Taste, for instance, the disarming beauty of Gerrit Dou's *Sleeping Dog* (1650), oil on panel, 16.5 × 21.6 cm (6½ × 8½ inches), in the Rose-Marie van Eijk van Otterloo Collection, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

72 Jean-Yves Lacoste, *Experience and the Absolute: Disputed Questions on the Humanity of Man*, trans. Mark Raftery-Skehan, ed. John D. Caputo, Perspectives in Continental Philosophy 40 (New York: Fordham, 2004), 25, 48. My project is very close to Lacoste's bridging of liturgy, topology, and eschatology.

73 Horst Schwebel, "Die Kirche und ihr Raum: Aspekte der Wahrnehmung," in *Kirchen – Raum – Pädagogik*, eds. Sigrid Glockzin-Bever and Horst Schwebel, Ästhetik – Theologie – Liturgie 12 (Münster/Hamburg/London: LIT-Verlag, 2002), 9–30, at 15.

74 Matthias D. Wüthrich, "Raumtheoretische Erwägungen zum Kirchenraum," in *Kirchen Macht Raum: Beiträge zu einer kontroversen Debatte,* ed. Christoph Sigrist (Zürich: Theologischer Verlag, 2010), 71–88.

the American Methodist theologian Susan J. White describes five reasons for the current renewed interest in sacred space and for the need to develop a Christian theology of space.[75] The first reason is external, and concerns the *socio-political* importance of sacred spaces, often places of conflict. In addition to this external factor, she recognizes four internal trends within contemporary Christian theology: *ecological awareness*, *biblical renewal*, *sacramental theology*, and *religious plurality*. The perception of the whole earth as imbued with holiness leads one to rethink fundamental theological issues as the concept of 'holy places' in a narrower sense, such as "how God is communicating through the material in a modern industrial-technological age."[76]

In addition to these five reasons for a renewed interest, she points out five problems: the lack of sustained systematic reflection, the bias of the other disciplines on the issue, the lack of fundamental theological questions, the lack of historical perspective, and the lack of social ethics. She observes that until recently, systematic theologians have not rigorously treated sacred space as a subject. This implies that sacred space has been treated nearly exclusively by architectural historians, liturgists, and historians of religion, giving the discussion a specific direction and character, deriving Christian sacredness from tribal traditions, relying on aesthetics as a mere "translation exercise" from a theology of visual arts, and focusing mostly on 'great' examples by ignoring the sacredness of more humble places. As a result, a Christian theology of sacred space has hitherto *not been very theological or even Christian*, and "more fundamental theological issues have been pushed aside. […] Questions like 'In what way and for what purpose does God communicate through place?' and "How is self-consciously 'sacred' space different from ordinary space?" are rarely asked in the current climate."[77] The attention to non-discursive forms of theology is healthy for theology. She also observes the lack of studies in the *historical* theology of sacred space: "What sort of theologies of sacred space have been operative in the Christian past? It is very difficult to build a contemporary systematic theology of sacred space on sand. It is groundwork that must be done if a Christian theology of sacred space is to have any depth to it." Finally, theologies of sacred space have failed to take seriously issues of *justice, mission,*

75 Susan J. White re-edited "The Theology of Sacred Space," in *The Sense of the Sacramental: Movement and Measure in Art and Music, Place and Time*, ed. David Brown and Ann Loades (London: SPCK, 1995), 31–43 as "Can We Talk about a Theology of Sacred Space?" in *Searching for Sacred Space: Essays on Architecture and Liturgical Design in the Episcopal Church*, ed. John Ander Runkle (New York: Church Publishing, 2002), 19–35. I refer to the latter.

76 White, *Talk*, 21.

77 Ibid. 25.

evangelization, and social ethics. Commenting on the Roman Catholic basilica in Yamoussoukro on the Ivory Coast, she complains: "Millions and millions of pounds were spent on this lavish, triumphalistic ecclesiastical space in the middle of a people who are, for the most part, trapped in cycles of poverty and disease, unemployment and exploitation. [...] On what does the 'sacredness' of this particular space rest?"

According to White, any systematic theology of sacred space today will be first and foremost an "exercise in methodology," implying that "there is not just one single Christian theology of sacred space possible within the boundaries, but perhaps a whole range of responsible Christian theologies."[78] Faithful to Karl Barth, she provides a brief impulse to a *Biblical* theology of sacred space, built on the dialectic of place and placelessness found in the Hebrew Scriptures, but emphasized in the incarnated person of Christ. Communitarian actions that remember Christ make places sacred. The presence of a Christian community, not even worshiping but in "their acts of charity and peacemaking," makes even ugly concrete boxes into sacred places: "To root the holiness of Christian sacred space in anything else is to be involved either in idolatry or in magic."[79] In principle, I entirely agree with this statement: sacredness is to be found in a *community*. Once this complete *irrelevance* of the building is agreed upon, the building *matters* in all its details, whether it hinders or enhances the communitarian actions: every community bears a "terrible responsibility for the sacredness of its space" and "needs to be involved in the continual work of remembrance or anamnesis," that is, "the threefold enterprise of remembering, embodying, and handing on (repeating) the sacred use of the space it inhabits." The building has an *ethical* dimension as

> an authentic sign and a witness to the love of God in a particular place; a sign and a witness that the people of God in that place are striving to be a holy people, after the model of Jesus, for the sake of a broken world [...]; an authentic witness to the sacrificial, self-giving love of God for the world. And if ever it stops being that, if it becomes associated with violence, greed, injustice, pride, division, it will stop being a holy place until

78 Ibid., 26.

79 Referring to a 1961 purpose-built Episcopal church at Newark, she argues: "All of this is why the ugly concrete block worship space in Newark can be a holy place, because it is occupied by and associated with a community of Christian people who are publicly known for their acts of charity and peacemaking, and who have drawn their building into the struggle for a radical openness to the will of God. To root the holiness of Christian sacred space in anything else is to be involved either in idolatry or in magic." Ibid., 34.

> those things are repudiated. This is what talk about desecration is all about; that a place can become materially associated with values, actions, and attitudes that are contrary to the gospel.[80]

As a consequence, the building has a *sacramental* value, not as an object in itself but as intimately bound up with the community's *kerygma, koinonia,* and *diakonia*: "Sacramentality now has to be talked about as part of the ongoing, mutual *encounter* between free, transcendent persons (divine and human persons) in which the physical, the *material, becomes a mode of self-disclosure for both*."[81] In other words, churches are media of our self-disclosure to God, and *vice versa*. As a Methodist, White does not attribute the sacredness of churches to their so-called *genius loci* (my *synaesthetic space*) but in relationship to the community, whether in its use (my *Eucharistic space*) or in its symbolic significance (my *kerygmatic space*).

In conclusion, this article provides a good starting point for a theology of church architecture. After pleading for the urgency of such a theology with five reasons, White exposed five problematic issues. She gave a start to many theologies of sacred space by extracting from a Biblical foundation some important ethical and sacramental consequences, which I would like to follow in this book. Above all, she underlines the importance of the *community*, whether in its liturgical actions or in relation to architectural symbolism. White ends her article with an open question: "What happens when our theology of sacred space comes up against an entirely different vision? [...] Or how do we deal with the idea that some places are positively profane?"[82] In the pages that follow, I attempt to formulate some answers. Both Bergmann and White have pointed at the epistemological issue of correlating theology and architecture. This is the task of theological aesthetics, to which I now turn.

Aesthetic Turn. Architecture and Theological Aesthetics

> Science states meanings; art expresses them. [...] The poetic as distinct from the prosaic, esthetic art as distinct from scientific, expression as

80 Ibid., 30, 33.

81 Ibid., 30–31. Italics added. She draws here on the sacramental theologian Ralph Keiffer, "The RCIA and Sacramental Efficacy," *Worship* 56/4 (1982): 333.

82 White, *Talk*, 31. For instance, White interprets the dispute in 1984 around the proposal to build a Discalced Carmelite convent at Auschwitz as the conflict between two different theologies of sacred space.

> distinct from statement, does something different from leading to an experience. It constitutes one.
>
> JOHN DEWEY[83]

Because it is my contention that architecture has much to offer theology, I situate my theological approach of architecture within the emerging discipline of *theological aesthetics*, and ask especially about the place of architecture within this multifaceted endeavor.[84] This interdisciplinary study examines theological issues as perceived through sense knowledge, the beautiful, and art. In the mid-twentieth century, the independent thought of systematic theologians such as the Roman Catholic Hans Urs von Balthasar and the Protestant Paul Tillich somehow announced this discipline. American theologians such as Frank Burch Brown, Alejandro García-Rivera, and Richard Viladesau have developed it in recent years.[85]

Introduction to Theological Aesthetics. Viladesau describes this interdisciplinary study as comprising "both an 'aesthetic theology' that interprets the objects of theology – God, faith, and theology itself – through the methods of aesthetic studies, and a more narrowly defined 'theological aesthetics' that interprets the objects of aesthetics – sensation, the beautiful, and art – from the properly theological starting point of religious conversion and in the light

83 John Dewey, *Art as Experience* (New York: Perigree Books, 1980), 84–85.

84 What is *theological aesthetics*? To my knowledge, there is no theological faculty in which it is taught as theological *discipline*. It still has to emancipate from being merely applied and illustrative theology. It also has to define its relationship to philosophical aesthetics. This is certainly the reason why the plethora of theological essays that can loosely be regrouped under the name of *theological aesthetics* do not provide clear hermeneutic tools for developing my own method. Hence, my intention of presenting this emerging interdisciplinary field is to demonstrate its validity by situating a context in which the themes of my proper investigation are discussed rather than by examining its diverse authors in detail and defining its limits as a theological discipline, which exceeds the purposes of this book. In my view, using the term *theological aesthetics* is equivalent with stating the value of non-verbal theologies, such as architecture.

85 To these general works in theological aesthetics can be added, among the publications in English, the essays of Dixon and Van der Leeuw and the more recent works of Begbie, Burch Brown, de Gruchy, Pattison, and Sherry. The recent multi-authored volumes edited by Begbie, Bychkov and Fodor, Thiessen, and Wood are also worthy to be mentioned. Among the authors who specifically dealt with architectural matters in systematic theology, see Gorringe, Kieckhefer, Seasoltz, Mark C. Taylor, and Woydack. Recent multi-authored publications include the volumes edited by Bergmann, Hejduk and Williamson, and Britton. See the bibliography.

of theological methods."[86] Theological aesthetics in the narrow sense can thus be divided into an *epistemological* account of human knowledge of the transcendent mystery through symbolic and aesthetic consciousness; a theology of *beauty* as a quality of divine revelation and a criterion of theological judgment; and an *empirical* account of *art* in general and the *arts* in particular as ways to communicate the divine. Whereas Balthasar's endeavor can be classified under a theology of self-evident Beauty based on the *Gestalt* of divine revelation in Christ,[87] my own approach is closer to Tillich's and comprises both the epistemological and the empirical dimensions. Rahner's relevant essays on the topic focus mainly on the epistemological issue of the transcendental ability to know the mystery through attention to particular works of art. As a corrective to Balthasar's approach "from above," Viladesau pleads for a "foundational" moment of theological aesthetics "from below," inquiring "into the conditions of possibility in humanity for the reception and interpretation of a divine revelation in the forms of sensation, beauty, and art."[88]

Theological Aesthetics and Architecture. From the point of view of architecture, one observation must be made. On the one hand, apart from Tillich, none of the authors deals explicitly with architecture, giving prominence to literature, music, and the visual arts. On the other hand, essays on the theology of architecture remarkably do not situate themselves within the discipline of theological aesthetics. To date, the emerging discipline of theological aesthetics does not treat architecture. Why? Does architecture not provide sufficient elements for developing a theology? The number of recent publications connecting architecture and religion appears to contradict such a harsh conclusion. I am inclined to think that the non-representational and material character of architecture causes theologians to prefer the other arts. However, it is precisely this specificity of architecture that is able to refresh theological aesthetics with new perspectives. Architecture is not visual but spatial. With this book, it is my intention to provide one building block towards a theological aesthetics that incorporates architecture.

It is impossible to provide a detailed synthesis of this discipline in the context of this book. Moreover, the multiplicity of approaches makes such an endeavor particularly complex. My purpose is rather to develop three

86 Richard Viladesau, *Theological Aesthetics: God in Imagination, Beauty, and Art* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press), 23.

87 Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Seeing the Form,* Vol. 1 of *The Glory of the Lord: A Theological Aesthetics*, trans. E. Leiva-Merikasis (Edinburg: T&T Clark, 1982), 36; Viladesau, *Aesthetics*, 25–35.

88 Viladesau, *Aesthetics*, 37.

statements into a heuristic framework that can be applied to the theological consideration of church architecture. In order to do so, I draw upon the thought of Roman Catholic theologians Karl Rahner and Richard Viladesau.

Rahner's Aesthetics. Rahner's theological aesthetics, considering images and poetry, is sedimented in a few relevant essays.[89] I retrieve a few elements of his thought.

The spiritual and the senses. In pointing out a "certain antagonism" between the reference to a nameless God whom no one has ever seen (Jn 1:18) and the centrality of the body in Christian rituals and doctrine (Incarnation, Resurrection), Rahner's theological aesthetics is grounded in the "insuperable pluralism" of sense experience.[90] As a consequence, apart from explicitly religious subject matter, any work of art can be called religious "when it helps us to refer directly to the absolute God."[91] Such mediation is not the exclusive domain of the word, although its intrinsic moment of negation permits transcendence beyond the finite object. Rahner's starting point is anthropological and his question epistemological, namely how art can contribute to our experience of God. Rahner argues that all spiritual knowledge is informed by sense experience. This does not mean that the senses encompass what can be said about God but only that "every religious experience has its origin in sense experience and exists only by referring – ever so implicitly – to some sense intuition."[92]

Sense pluralism. Although human being is a unity, corporality is a complex reality of irreducible and unequally important sense experiences, "which must enter into action together" for the religious meaning of art to be understood.[93] Rahner posits therefore – without using the term – the necessity of a *synaesthetic* experience in order "to be completely human."[94] Synaesthesy holds together the *unity* of the experiencing subject and the irreducible *plurality* of the sense experiences. Thus, even though faith comes through hearing (Paul) and the ears are the organ of the Christian (Luther), all the senses

89 A fair discussion of Rahner's 'theological aesthetics' can be found in Gesa Elsbeth Thiessen, "Towards a Theological Aesthetics: Karl Rahner's Contribution," in *Theology and Conversation: Towards a Relational Theology*, Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium CLXXII, edited by Jacques Haers and Peter de Mey (Leuven: Leuven University Press/ Peeters, 2003), 857–864.

90 Rahner, *Meaning*, 149.

91 Ibid., 157.

92 Ibid., 150.

93 Ibid., 153.

94 "To be completely human, persons must produce a work of art for which all their powers collaborate. [...] We are and we should be persons in whom the many incommensurable dimensions of our *sensorium* enter into activity." Ibid.

must be involved in religious experience. The Logos is also Image, Icon, and Incarnate.

Word and image are complementary. In its plural sense experience, art has "a religious significance that cannot be replaced by the word."[95] Art is not merely illustrative, and interpretive words – however essential for pedagogical and social reasons[96] – are no substitute for the religious experience of the work of art. Art provides "a fundamental and irreducible moment of the total religious act" that "can be rendered intelligible only by performing it, not by talking about it."[97]

Sensory experience of transcendence. Rahner's basic thesis is that "all peak experiences of every *sense* domain, and not only those of the sense of hearing, may be the basis and element of a religious act."[98] Rahner argues that every experience of a finite object "is carried by an a priori pre-apprehension of the whole breadth of the formal object of the sense power. It is more than the grasping of the concrete single object that is being known."[99] This "sensory experience of transcendence," such as hearing a sound and its surrounding stillness, or seeing an object and the expanse beyond it, is the basis for a properly religious experience of transcendence.

Explicitly religious art. But apart from this implicitly religious dimension, the Church needs also explicitly religious art. Christians "cannot express and visualize their religiosity only by means of abstract paintings without using, for instance, the crucifix and other explicitly religious images." The Church as community "needs images that are basically understood by all and that refer explicitly to the history of salvation that all believe in and confess."[100]

95 Ibid., 155.

96 Religious images require a verbal explanation and interpretation "both to be recognized as expressly Christian by those who see them, and in order that, as the religious images of a Christian community, they may perform a social function in the Church. [...] There exists naturally no visible reality from which alone its Christian significance might be gathered. That this image of the crucified Jesus Christ refers to the historical savior cannot be gathered just from seeing it, although the religious significance of this image of the crucified Lord is not totally explained by the words used to interpret it." Ibid., 160.

97 Ibid., 156. Meaningfully, Rahner refers to the Ignatian "application of the senses," in which the retreatant is invited to imagine how a reality could be experienced through the senses, as a most sublime level of meditation.

98 Ibid., 157–158.

99 Ibid., 158.

100 Ibid., 159.

In conclusion, according to Rahner, in whose line I situate my own approach, word and image are complementary in the theological endeavor of reaching out to the unutterable Mystery by which we are grasped. Both the divine Mystery and the Incarnation are at the basis of his theological aesthetics. Because his starting point is anthropological, Rahner values the implicitly religious dimension of art to reveal the depths of human existence as an answer to the transcendental nature of human being.

The Cross of Beauty. For the American theologian Richard Viladesau, the aesthetic realm is a *locus theologicus* that complements conceptual forms of theology. Whereas he presents his philosophical premises in his *Theological Aesthetics* (1999), drawing mainly on the Jesuit theologians Bernard Lonergan and Karl Rahner, in his later works he applies his theory to specific works of art, giving preference to the visual arts, but not engaging in architecture.[101] Viladesau defines three areas within the discipline of theological aesthetics, depending on its focus: the *epistemological* role of imagination and the senses in human knowledge; *beauty* and taste; and specific works of *art*.[102] I will briefly engage in each one of these three areas, and conclude with the original place Viladesau attributes to the cross in theological aesthetics.

Transcendental approach. We can distinguish between two basic approaches, *subject*-oriented, considering the epistemological role of imagination and the senses in human knowledge, and *object*-oriented, considering specific *aesthetica* or works of art. As a source of religious expressions of human experience, even when the religious dimension remains implicit, it is complementary to verbal and conceptual forms of theology. In the line of Lonergan and Rahner, his is a transcendental method, based on the mystery of God as the condition of possibility of all knowledge, understanding the imagination and the senses as the bridge between the sensible reality and human knowledge of God.[103]

Divine beauty. It is my contention that the concepts of beauty and taste cannot provide objective criteria for discerning between good and bad art, but with Viladesau, who draws on Balthasar on this point, I can say that "beauty points to the fact that being is in essence *joyous*: self-presence with delight. And the condition of possibility for finite beauty is the existence of the *Beautiful*

101 Richard Viladesau is a Roman Catholic priest and professor of Systematic Theology at Fordham University, New York. His books on art include *Theological Aesthetics* (1999), *Theology and the Arts* (2000), *The Beauty of the Cross* (2006), and *The Triumph of the Cross* (2008). See the bibliography.

102 Viladesau, *Aesthetics*, 11.

103 Ibid., 77–78.

as such."[104] From a theological point of view, wherever the beautiful might be encountered, it points towards delight and affirms divine Beauty. Beauty says something about two subjects, human and divine, but cannot serve to compare two objects: for instance, whether the parish churches of *San Paolo* in Foligno (2009) (Fig. 1.4) and *St Prokop* in Prague (2001) (Fig. 1.5) are objectively beautiful. Nonetheless, a theological aesthetics from below posits that, once someone is struck by creatural beauty, an access is made to divine Beauty.[105]

Word and music. In *Theology and the Arts*, Viladesau examines the relationship between word and music in liturgical praxis. What happens to the word when it is sung in a liturgical context? I would like to retrieve four elements from his analysis, in which he does not eschew spatial metaphors in order to lay bare what music adds to the word. First, music places the word within a communitarian space: "Because singing is not our normal form of address, in it

FIGURE 1.4 San Paolo*, Foligno, Italy* (*Massimiliano and Doriana Fuksas, 2009*)*. Exterior*

104 Ibid., 138. Emphasis mine.

105 "God as the beautiful is also present in a general revelation through all positive experiences of beauty: natural, interpersonal, artistic. If revelation is beautiful, then, conversely, every experience of beauty is a revelation of God, to varying extents, at different levels, and in diverse ways." Richard Viladesau, *Theology and the Arts: Encountering God through Music, Art and Rhetoric* (New York and Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 2000), 227.

FIGURE 1.5 St Prokop, *Prague-Nové Butovice, Czech Republic* (*Zdenek Jiran, Michal Kohout, 2001*)

the word is taken out of the 'I-Thou' context of speech and *placed in the 'we' context of shared musical experience*." Second, music creates a space for contemplation and celebration of the word: "Singing enables us to *step back from the word's immediacy* as communication and to make it an aesthetic object; it allows us to *contemplate and to celebrate* the word rather than simply hear or speak it."[106] Third, music opens an eschatological and ethical longing, and should contain an element of unrest, incompleteness, and dissatisfaction instead of pleasing, superficial sentimentality.[107] Fourth, Viladesau ends this reflection with a consideration of "sacred silence" (similar to the architectural equivalent of sacred emptiness). Religious silence is not mere absence of sound but "an active attitude of attending to the encounter with the absolute Mystery in Itself, unmediated by creatures. [...] Both word and music occupy the mind and senses; the purpose of silence is to free them from activity and create the space for contemplation."[108] In conclusion, there are four spatial

106 Ibid., 48. My emphasis.

107 Ibid., 53.

108 Ibid., 56.

dimensions that the arts – in this case music, but they are also applicable to architecture – open for the word in a liturgical context: communitarian, celebrative, eschatological, and contemplative space.

Centrality of the Cross. Unlike Barth, for whom Christ suffering and triumphant should not be represented for the sake of God's beauty, Viladesau argues that the "true depth of the problem for Christianity [in relation to art] appears only in the light of the cross of Christ as the revelation of God and of God's relation to our human condition."[109] In this matter, Rahner argues that the central theological problem of theological aesthetics is that of historical revelation, and Balthasar recalls the iconoclast emperor Constantine V saying that a merely human representation of Christ is an assault on Christology and eventually leads to Nestorianism.[110] There was no beauty in him (Is 53:2), and the wise folly of the cross (1 Co 1:17) as the model for and imperative to self-denial (Ph 2:5) is a permanent "reminder of the danger of a facile humanism."[111] The cross speaks to us of our existential situation, not of abstract human nature: the glorious cross reveals, condemns, and redeems sin as idolatry of the self. In this sense, the cross is not a beautiful thing but the symbol of a beautiful act:

> Spiritual beauty for the Christian is not simply unalloyed sensible pleasure, but includes what is ugly and alienating – insofar as it is transformed or transformable by God's triumphant love. […] For the Christian, the portrayal of suffering and need can be 'beautiful' insofar as it makes us realize the truth of the human situation in need of salvation, evokes the beautiful vision of hope, and stirs up the beautiful moral response of compassion. Such art is sacred in a prophetic-ethical sense.[112]

In conclusion, Viladesau provides a transcendental corrective 'from below' to a Balthasarian theological aesthetics envisioning divine Beauty. The cross as the paradoxical symbol of a beautiful act has to remain central in a Christian theological aesthetics. Non-verbal theology provides communitarian, celebrative, contemplative, and eschatological space for the proclaimed, preached, and

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109 Ibid., 190, referring to Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics* II, 1, 666.

110 Rahner, *Meaning*, 157; Balthasar, 40–41.

111 Viladesau, *Aesthetics*, 190.

112 Viladesau, *Arts*, 147–148. Compare with: "God's beauty embraces death as well as life, fear as well as joy, what we might call the ugly as well as what we might call the beautiful." Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics* II, 1, 665, quoted in Viladesau, *Aesthetics*, 198.

praised Word.[113] Drawing on Rahner and Viladesau, I will now retrieve three elements that are applicable to architecture.

Word, image, and space. The value of non-verbal theology. The first element that I retrieve from the emerging discipline of theological aesthetics is the value of non-verbal theology as "bad conscience" or complementary corrective to conceptualization.[114] An essential dimension of faith is missed when attention is only given to doctrine and theoretical thought. Rahner spoke of an "existential unity of reality and self-awareness" that is not completely mediated by a concept.[115] Theological aesthetics is possible because both art and theology are human self-expressions.

The non-verbal dimension in theology has an intrinsic intelligibility. It is not irrational, because the original encounter with the unutterable mystery makes knowledge possible.[116] With Gadamer, we might say that art is knowledge,[117] and for a theologian, art is implicit or explicit knowledge about God, or, to say it more appropriately with Rahner, about "what persons really are in the sight of God."[118] Rahner already noticed how sacramental matter becomes intelligible only when liturgically performed.[119] Earthly matter, usually

113 In addition to *theological aesthetics* as the theological discipline that relates to the three aforementioned areas (sensible knowledge, beauty, and art), Viladesau appeals for theology to be *aesthetic* itself. In order to make his point, he uses the (for Balthasar still pejorative) term *aesthetic theology* as "an understanding of faith that is reflective, but whose reflection is embodied in artistic modes of thinking and communicating." Richard Viladesau, *The Beauty of the Cross: The Passion of Christ in Theology and the Arts, from the Catacombs to the Eve of the Renaissance* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 4 and Balthasar, 38, 79. Hence, both terms *theological aesthetics* and *aesthetic theology* are not interchangeable. *Aesthetic theology* could still be understood as *beautified, poetic*, or *applied* theology, and thus secondary or illustrative, without the seriousness of conceptual theology. In order to counter this objection, Viladesau emphasizes the "artistic modes of thinking and communicating." Because *theological aesthetics* as a discipline honors the value of non-verbal theology, there is no need to add confusion by using another term, so I will not follow Viladesau in his suggestion, although I entirely agree with his point of an "embodied reflection."

114 Karl Rahner, "Theology and the Arts," *Thought: A Review of Culture and the Arts* 57/224 (1982): 17–29, at 20. Rahner argues that human reason always thinks with a bad conscience, for it is grasped by the unfathomable Mystery.

115 Ibid., 17.

116 Rahner, *Arts*, 20.

117 Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method* (London: Sheed & Ward, 1975 (1960)), 87.

118 Rahner, *Against*, 163.

119 Rahner, *Meaning*, 156.

technified and narrowed down by the sciences, is seen in its true light by sacramental use.[120]

In the contraposition of word and image, Viladesau notes that the ultimate meaning of divine revelation is neither the sensible nor the conceptual, but the *personal*: "Because Christ is God's *Logos* and *Eikon* in person, words and images of God are possible. [...] Pictures allow us to relate to the person of Christ (or to life 'in' Christ) in ways that go beyond oral and written transmissions of the message about him and his meaning."[121] This comment stands in sharp contrast with Rahner's observation that the word "alone can redeem that which constitutes the ultimate imprisonment of all realities which are not expressed in word: the dumbness of their reference to God."[122] In the eyes of Viladesau, Rahner is here "excessively logocentric."[123] In my view however, Rahner points out the *necessity of the interpretive word*: phenomenology (*perceived space*) and liturgy (*lived space*) without hermeneutics (*conceived space*) are insufficient. In any case, both word and image are limited and need to be apophatically aware of their limitation in order to speak about the ineffable, or rather about "what people are in the sight of God." I am inclined to add 'space' to the list of word and image: the spatial practice of *St Gregory of Nyssa Episcopal church* for instance (*infra*) needs neither word nor image in order to relate to the person of Christ in the Spirit, and yet is clarified by word and image (Figs. 5.2–5.5). The dynamic communitarian use of the building shapes the community into People of God listening to the Word, Body of Christ gathered around the Table, and Temple of the Spirit dancing and celebrating as one sanctified whole of redeemed sinners.[124] Consequently, my first intention in this book is not – like McNamara – to judge between so-called 'good' and 'bad'

120 Karl Rahner, "Priest and Poet," in *Theological Investigations*, vol. III, trans. K.M. Kruger and B. Kruger (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1974), 294–317, at 296.

121 Viladesau, *Aesthetics*, 170. His conclusion posits a permanent priority of the poetic and symbolic over the conceptual. Ibid., 209.

122 Rahner, *Priest*, 302.

123 Viladesau, *Arts*, 30. In this sense, Viladesau spoke of "aesthetic conversion," modelling it on Lonergan's "moral and intellectual conversion" and Robert Doran's "psychic conversion." Ibid., 281 n116.

124 The term "Temple of the Spirit" seems too static in comparison to the more dynamic "people" and "body." "People" is directional and receptive, as pilgrims on a way, and "body" is organic and alive. Although it honors the spatial and spacious dimension, "Temple" stands in sharp contrast to the dynamic reality of the Spirit. In any case, "Temple" stands for "sanctuary" or "sacred space." It is my contention to bring to light the dynamism of this concept (as "lived space"). Later on, I will suggest understanding Temple as "Garden" and "Dance" for a more dynamic terminology.

architecture for religious purposes, but rather to bring to light the non-verbal qualities of architecture in speaking about God and about "what persons really are in the sight of God."

Particular loci for the unutterable Mystery. Secondly, the method of aesthetic theology depends on the aesthetic realm, and thus must be hermeneutical and "local," as suggested by the American theologian Garrett Green:

> The hermeneutical function of Christian theology implies that its proper form is not 'systematic' in the philosophical or foundational sense. [...] Rather, theology as an interpretive discipline ought to be 'local' or topical, the elaboration of specific *loci*, whose relationships to one another are ad hoc rather than a priori. [...] Doing theology this way is more like doing literary criticism than elaborating a philosophical system.[125]

According to Rahner, the gap between our human expressions and the divine mystery cannot be bridged. Nobody has seen God and yet we know the Incarnate Logos. He defines human reason as "the capacity for the incomprehensible, [...] the capacity to be grasped by something which ever eludes our grasp."[126] Thiessen concludes "that it is precisely in and through the particular, subjective, immanent and historical, that a glimpse of the universal, objective, transcendent and eternal can be expressed."[127] We need the particular as a way to the universal, while maintaining the apophatic dimension of its negation. Rahner admits that the ability to hear the poetic word, that is, "to perceive in the individual word the unutterable mystery, the ability to hear the incarnational and incarnate incomprehensibility, indeed, to hear the word which became flesh," is a prerequisite for hearing the word of God.[128]

Because the object of theology is transcendent mystery, the non-verbal has an advantage over the verbal: "Because they relate to a transcendent object, many of religion's expressions are appropriately nonverbal, and a 'negative' hermeneutic must be applied even to its verbal expressions."[129] Because God is ineffable, the non-verbal is appropriately apophatic. The apophatic dimension of art is its humility, or awareness of its limitations. Viladesau enumerates

125 Garrett Green, *Imagining God: Theology and the Religious Imagination* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1989), 148.

126 Rahner, *Arts,* 20.

127 Thiessen, *Rahner*, 861.

128 Karl Rahner, "Poetry and the Christian," in *Theological Investigations*, vol. IV, trans. K. Smith (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1974), 357–367, at 361.

129 Viladesau, *Aesthetics*, 17.

objective and subjective limitations, especially the problems of ambivalence, distraction, and idolatry.[130] A work of art may be a classic when these limitations are overcome "in such a way that many people in different contexts find in it a challenging excess of meaning."[131]

Just as Balthasar pleaded for a kneeling theology,[132] Rahner suggested the need of a mystagogic and poetic theology. The central methodological principle of theology must be a "*reductio in mysterium*."[133] The concern of theology can be nothing but God, not as idea, but as existential encounter:

> God, and what is meant by God, *can only be grasped when we surrender our own conceptual understanding to the ineffable and holy mystery* which lay hold on us as the mystery which is near to us and which embraces us in love. The theologian is not the purely intellectual expositor but *the one who thrusts all duly explained earthly realities into the incomprehensible mystery of God*. The theologian is the one who shows that no human proposition [...] is ultimately really understood unless it is released into the blessed incomprehensibility of God.[134]

This statement is replete with paradoxes. We do not understand God, or any human proposition about God, until we surrender ourselves to the divine incomprehensibility. Rahner defines the theologian as the one who thrusts earthly realities into the divine mystery. This is an important statement for my research. If architecture can be perceived as "human proposition," no building is fully 'understood' unless it is released into the divine mystery. Systematic theology dealing with architecture is a second-order language that reflects critically on religious experience in architecture.[135]

Thinking in terms of space. A transcendental approach. Thirdly, Rahner revealed an implicitly religious dimension of non-verbal arts, which are "autonomous ways of human self-expression that cannot be adequately

130 "Poor art can sometimes inspire; on the other hand, the beauty of religious art can leave one unmoved, can incite a banal reaction, or can distract from the message." Viladesau, *Arts*, 163.

131 Ibid., 162.

132 Balthasar, 18–19.

133 Karl Rahner, "Reflections on Methodology in Theology," in *Theological Investigations*, vol. XI (London: Darton, Longman, and Todd, 1974), 101–114, at 105–110.

134 Karl Rahner, "A Theology That We Can Live With," in *Theological Investigations*, vol. XXI, trans. H.M. Riley (New York: Crossroad, 1988), 99–112, at 111–112. My emphasis.

135 I base this statement on David Tracy, *The Analogical Imagination: Christian Theology and the Culture of Pluralism* (New York: Crossroad, 1981), 408.

translated into words."[136] Because of its liturgical function, church architecture is the locus of *explicitly* religious experience, expression, and discourse. But because of the specificity of architecture as being non-verbal and non-representative, most of the time it might rather be the locus of *implicitly* religious experience, or human experience susceptible to correlation with the sacred: "Whatever is expressed in art, argues Rahner, is a product of human transcendentality by which, as spiritual and free beings, we strive for the totality of all reality. [...] It is only because we are transcendental beings that art and theology can really exist."[137] Tillich, perhaps more skeptical based on a protestant principle, would rather emphasize human ambiguity due to the Fall: art may well be the expression of a truncated form of subjectivity as well.[138] But for Rahner, all human creation (architecture included) is an expression that implicitly – anonymously?[139] – embodies transcendence:

> We might then argue that the self-expression contained in a Rembrandt painting or a Bruckner symphony is so strongly inspired and borne by divine revelation, by grace, and by the self-communication of God that it tells us, in a way that cannot be translated adequately in a verbal theology, what persons really are in the sight of God.[140]

In a similar way, I argue that, for instance, the chapels in Seattle, Berlin, Ronchamp, Wachendorf, and Helsinki tell us what persons really are in the sight of God. In order to reveal this transcendental drive, the theologian has to thrust the architectural reality into the Mystery. This can be done by way of a correlational theology, as proposed by Tillich, Schillebeeckx, and Tracy.[141]

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136 Rahner, *Against*, 162.

137 Ibid., 165.

138 Both, however, agree on the potential of art to bear transcendence. Both also agree on the fact that not all human creations succeed in that: Rahner speaks of "strive," Tillich of "experiments" and "victories."

139 Rahner's controversial concept of "anonymous Christian" comes evidently to mind, but I refer also to Rahner's use of the term "anonymous" when explaining the piety or reverence of an Impressionistic painting. Rahner, *Arts*, 27 and *Against*, 167.

140 Rahner, *Against*, 163. In a similar vein, Karl Barth stated that Mozart's music belongs to theology, in Karl Barth, *Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart*, trans. Clarence K. Pott (Grand Rapids, MI: 1986).

141 A correlational theology moves back and forth between two poles, the temporal situation of common human experience, and eternal truth as sedimented in Christian tradition. Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology*, vol. I (Digswell Place: James Nisbet, 1957), 3–4. David Tracy revises Tillich's correlational method into a "revised method of correlation," which

This implicitly religious dimension of art brought to light by Rahner, due to the transcendental nature of humanity, implies that it is sufficient to reveal the depths of human existence in order to express transcendence, as Thiessen argues: "When a work of art reaches, and is revelatory of, the depths of human existence, it reaches the realm where true religious experience takes place."[142] This first, anonymous meaning may be so predominant that it might even relegate the explicit Christian message to the background.[143] This corresponds, in my view, to Rahner's conception of holiness as being "fully attuned to life."[144] For my study, it is important to bring to light (and to words) this religious dimension of a building – its ability to reveal the depths of human existence – apart from its liturgical function. This religious dimension in architecture is an answer to the transcendental dimension of human being. It is an answer to the question: does architecture only serve as a support for religion and the other arts, or is it itself a 'spatial interpretation' of the Word?

As a conclusion, my approach to theological aesthetics, modeled on Rahner and Viladesau, is *epistemological, apophatic,* and *transcendental*. Based on particular case studies as loci for the unutterable Mystery, such theological aesthetics aims to reveal the theological value of aesthetic *embodiment*, the *apophatic* preservation of the divine Mystery, and the *implicit* religious dimension of human self-expression. On the basis of this interdisciplinary approach, I will

includes hermeneutics: theology is an attempt to establish mutually critical correlations between an interpretation of the Christian tradition and an interpretation of contemporary experience. David Tracy, "Hermeneutical Reflections in the New Paradigm," in *Paradigm Change in Theology*, ed. Hans Küng and David Tracy (New York: Crossroad, 1989), 35, 54. Tracy defined analogy as "a language of ordered relationships articulating similarity-in-difference" in *Analogical Imagination*, 408. This *epistemological* correlation is based upon the *ontological* correlation between God and humanity, and is only resolved in an *eschatological* correlation, when existential question and theological answer coincide. See also Annekatrien Depoorter, *Naar een integere theologie van de ervaring: theologische herijking van de moderne correlatiemethodes van Paul Tillich en Edward Schillebeeckx,* unpublished doctoral dissertation (KU Leuven, 2006). Depoorter reproaches Tillich for failing to analyze the situation and for having adapted his questions to the theological answers, as if speaking only for and within an elitist Christian world. Schillebeeckx introduces an intermediary step, giving space to the human answer, which is always an interpreted and situated experience, before giving the theological answer based on revelation. According to Depoorter, the method of correlation cannot give account of religious pluralism. Correlational theology must also be transformative of the theological interpretation and of the understanding of the human situation.

142 Thiessen, *Rahner*, 859.

143 Viladesau, *Aesthetics*, 168–169.

144 Rahner, *Against,* 167, and *Arts*, 28.

present an early account of a mystagogic (and thus interdisciplinary) reading of church architecture from the perspective of the worshiping assembly. This account is based upon one idea, namely the paradoxical distinction and union between sanctuary and nave. This basic polarity (modeled on Christology and with anthropological and cosmological repercussions) between profane and sacred, between accessibility and inaccessibility is at the core of *mystagogic space*. Approaching, entering, and appropriating this spatial dynamic is approaching, entering, and appropriating the spiritual dynamic of the divine Mystery. Let me now present my threefold method for laying bare theological relevance of contemporary church architecture.

How? The Itinerary *in Deum* from Place to Spirit

> In a certain sense interpretation probably is re-creation, but this is a re-creation not of the creative act but of the created work, which has to be brought to representation in accord with the meaning the interpreter finds in it.
>
> HANS-GEORG GADAMER[145]

In this final methodological section of this introductory chapter, I propose a threefold theological method for contemporary church architecture. This section has three parts. First, *in search of lost space*, I present the triad that I borrow from the French sociologist Henri Lefebvre and on which I build my own method. Second, *in search of a method*, I expound my threefold method. Third, *in search of classics*, I highlight the use of case studies as an essential part of my inductive method, for theological reflection has to be done *in* architecture.

In Search of Lost Space. A Space Odyssey

> Any definition of architecture
> requires a prior analysis and exposition of the concept of space.
>
> HENRI LEFEBVRE[146]

145 Gadamer, *Truth*, 119.

146 “Mais qu’est-ce que l’architecture? Pour la définir, il faut avoir déjà analysé, puis exposé l’espace.” Henri Lefebvre, *La production de l’espace* (Paris: Anthropos, 1986 (1974)), 22. Henceforth, PE. [*The Production of Space*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991), 15] Henceforth, PS.

Architecture is first of all an experience of space – not the Aristotelian empty *container* that so terrified Pascal, but the *relational* event of expansive spaciousness, as suggested above by Löw and Wüthrich.[147] These are two fundamentally distinctive conceptions of space, relating differently to place.

Space as empty container. On the one hand, a *place* can be defined as a neutral *location* (a limited part of indefinite *space*) with a particular meaning:

> 'Space' is more *abstract* than 'place.' What begins as *undifferentiated* space becomes place as we get to know it better and endow it with value. [...] From the *security* and *stability* of place we are aware of the *openness*, *freedom*, and *threat* of space, and *vice versa*. Furthermore, if we think of space as that which allows *movement*, then place is *pause*; each pause in movement makes it possible for location to be transformed into place.[148]

In contrast, the American phenomenologist Edward Casey argues that, in our experience, (concrete) place comes before (abstract) space. We are always already *placed* somewhere. He uses the term "implacement" in order to

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147 "The eternal silence of these infinite spaces scares me." Blaise Pascal, *Pensées* [Lafuma 201]. For the distinction between an Aristotelian and a relational concept of space, apart from the aforementioned works by Löw and Wüthrich, see also Thomas F. Torrance, *Space, Time and Incarnation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1969) and Edward Casey, *The Fate of Place: A Philosophical History* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 1998). Next to the Aristotelian definition, the Oxford Dictionaries mention space as "the freedom to live, think, and develop in a way that suits one." See http://oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/space?q=space [accessed July 7, 2012].

148 Yi-Fu Tuan, *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience* (Minneapolis, MN and London: University of Minnesota Press, 2011 (1977)), 6. My emphasis. See also Tim Cresswell, *Place: A Short Introduction* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2004), 7 and Walter Brueggemann, *The Land: Place as Gift, Promise and Challenge in Biblical Faith* (London: SPCK, 1978), 5. This conception corresponds with the Aristotelian idea of space as *container* and the Cartesian definition of *res extensa*, the abstract, uniform, and absolute space of locations without meaning. See Edward S. Casey, *Getting Back Into Place: Toward a Renewed Understanding of the Place-World* (Bloomington, Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1993); John Inge, *A Christian Theology of Place* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003); and Renée Ryan, *From Head to Foot Set in Our Place: Sacred Space as the Expression of Religious Experience and Imagination,* unpublished doctoral dissertation, Faculty of Philosophy, KU Leuven 2008, especially 29–56.

underline the immediacy and immanence of this experience.[149] Nevertheless, in privileging place over space, he still understands space as empty container.

Space as relational place. On the other hand, the French Jesuit scholar Michel de Certeau defined space as "practiced place": space "is in a sense actuated by the ensemble of movements deployed within it. Space occurs as the effect produced by the operations that orient it, situate it, temporalize it."[150] In a similar vein, the French Marxist social philosopher Henri Lefebvre argued that space is "produced" by people in their *spatial practice* of the place. Hence, he speaks of "social space":

> (Social) space is not a thing among other things, nor a product among other products [...] there is nothing imagined, unreal or 'ideal' about it as compared, for example, with signs, representations, ideas or dreams. Itself the outcome of past actions, social space is what permits fresh actions to occur, while suggestings others and prohibiting yet others.[151]

Social space can still be 'read', but more as *texture* than as *text*: architecture becomes then *architexture*, when also its context is included.[152] Social space can only be understood when the right attention is given to its three dimensions of *perceived, conceived,* and *lived space*: "The perceived-conceived-lived triad (in spatial terms: spatial practice, representations of space, representational spaces) loses all force if it is treated as an abstract 'model'."[153]

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149 Edward S. Casey, "How to Get from Space to Place in a Fairly Short Stretch of Time: Phenomenological Prelomena," in *Senses of Place*, eds. Steven Feld, Keith H. Basso (Santa Fe, NM: School of American Research Press, 1996), 13–52. To claim priority of place, Casey draws on the experience of the Pintupi aboriginals in Australia and confirms this with the philosophical thought of Archytas, Aristotle, Heidegger, and Bachelard.

150 Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, tr. Steven Rendall (Berkeley, Los Angeles, CA, London: University of California Press, 1988), 117.

151 PE 88–89 (PS 73).

152 PE 140 (PS 131–132).

153 PE 50 (PS 40). Lefebvre describes this triad twice in his introductory chapter, adding nuances (and confusion) as he moves along: briefly in PE 42–43 (PS 33), and in more detail in PE 48–52 (PS 38–42). The renaming of *espace perçu, conçu,* and *vécu* into *Firstspace*, *Secondspace*, and *Thirdspace* by the American spatial theorist Edward Soja does not bring substantially new content to Lefebvre's concepts. Although they represent the advantage of concision, his terms impose too strong an order: *Firstspace* is not always the first space consciously encountered, envisioned, or engendered in a place. Lefebvre points out that *conceived space* is the dominating space, and may therefore be the first space of which we are aware. See Edward W. Soja, *Thirdspace: Journeys to Los Angeles and Other Real and Imagined Spaces* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996), 8–9, 68.

Let me consider these one by one, as they provide the fundamental triad on which I build my method.

Perceived space comes to the fore in the day-to-day spatial practice of a place.[154] In order for the space to be *perceived*, all the senses are engaged: "In cloister or cathedral, space is measured by the ear. [...] It is in this way, and at this level, in the *non-visible*, that bodies find one another."[155] Lefebvre compares *spatial practice* (which is synonym with *perceived space*) to reading a text aloud. The spatial practice of our body 'understands' a place in a way that semiotic decodification and classification cannot – with the body:

> The use of the cathedral's monumental space necessarily entails its supplying answers to all the questions that assail anyone who crosses the threshold. For visitors are bound to become aware of their own footsteps, and listen to the noises, the singing; they must breathe the incense-laden air, and plunge into a particular world, that of sin and redemption; they will partake of an ideology; they will contemplate and decipher the symbols around them; and they will thus, on the basis of their own bodies, experience a total being in a total space.[156]

Instead of deciphering codes and subcodes, spatial practice "implies a 'supercoding', in that it tends towards the appropriating presence of the totality (*relevant ainsi d'un surcodage parce qu'il tend vers la présence appropriante de la totalité*)."[157] Hence, *perceived space* comes to the fore not through a distant vision of physical limits but through actively practicing the place with an assured prereflective spatial competence, even though reflective coherence on this practice might be lacking.[158]

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154 "Anyone knows what is meant when we speak of a 'room' in an apartment, the 'corner' of the street, a 'marketplace', a shooping or cultural 'centre', a public 'place', and so on. These terms of everyday discourse [...] correspond to a specific use of that space, and hence to a spatial practice that they express and constitute." PE 23–24 (PS 16).

155 PE 258 (PS 225).

156 PE 253–254 (PS 220–221).

157 PE 256 (PS 222). The English translation for *appropriante* reads: all-embracing. I have altered the translation to highlight the function of our own appropriation of a building (the third dimension in my threefold method), of which spatial practice (perceived space) is a first step. In this sense, Lefebvre speaks often of 'appropriated space'. See, for instance, PS 31, 368–369.

158 "The specific spatial competence and performance of every society member can only be evaluated empirically. [...] A spatial practice must have a certain cohesiveness, but this

Approaching a place is not looking at a distant object but entering a stage for the production of social space through one's bodily spatial practice. Lefebvre points here at a dimension that is often subconsciously forgotten, especially in picture books replete with empty churches. This might be an essential dimension for theology because of the active role of the bodily senses. I underline this by unfolding *perceived space* as *synaesthetic space* in Chapter 3, with the help of phenomenology. It is perhaps obvious that a church building is no empty container but relational space that must be practiced by a worshiping community. For instance, the cylinder-form and the red brickwork of the *Cathedral of the Resurrection* in Évry define its *synaesthetic space* addressed to the body and might provoke at the same time the familiarity of a house and the security of a fortress (Fig. 0.1). Light falls in from above: this might elevate and orient toward the transcendent Mystery.

By the term *conceived space*, Lefebvre indicates the *representations* of space. These are the imaginative spaces living in minds and on maps:

> *Representations of space:* conceptualized space (*l'espace conçu*), the space of scientists, planners, urbanists, technocratic subdividers and social engineers, as of a certain type of artist with a scientific bent – all of whom identify what is lived and what is perceived with what is conceived. (Arcane speculation about Numbers, with its talk of the golden ratio, moduli and 'canons', tends to perpetuate this view of matters.) This is the dominant space in any society (or mode of production). Conceptions of space tend […] towards a system of verbal (and therefore intellectually worked out) signs.[159]

Because of the 'modernist trinity' of the visible, the readable, and the intelligible, the inherent danger of this dominant space in society is to reduce the thick density of *perceived* and *lived space* to the illusory transparency of mental or abstract space by a "symbolism (*symbolisation*) which conceals more than it reveals, the more so since the relations of reproduction are divided into

does not imply that it is coherent (in the sense of intellectually worked out or logically conceived)." PE 48 (PS 38).

159 PE 48–49 (PS 38–39). According to Soja, *Secondspace* includes also the "purely creative imagination of some artists and poets," which in my view does not entirely respect Lefebvre's intention. Soja, 67. Lefebvre speaks of artists in this space, but only those who are close to scientificity, *identifying the lived and the perceived to the conceived*. It is clear, that Lefebvre does not point at their "purely creative imagination" but at their intellectual, conceptual speculations of modules, canons, and numbers. These so-called artists apply some previously conceived scheme in order to produce beauty. Creativity belongs to *lived space*.

frontal, public, overt – and hence coded – relations on the one hand, and, on the other, covert, clandestine, and repressed relations."[160] This is the original sin of picture books of empty churches, reducing architectural experience to a visual representation. Lefebvre's whole essay can be read as pleading for *social space* against abstract or mental space imposed on a concrete reality. Mental space can only provide descriptive inventories of what exists *in* space or fragmentary discourses *on* space, but no knowledge *of* space itself.[161] Spatial reality is transposed onto minds and maps, tending towards a system of verbal *signs*, easy to grasp and decipher, hiding dark, creative forces behind a façade. *Conceived space* has literally only eyes for the image or representation of social space.

Entering a church is entering a text of signs and representations that make a space meaningful. Hermeneutics seems to be the appropriate discipline to interpret the *conceived space* of contemporary church architecture. Lefebvre warns against mere (albeit *spatial*) 'semiotics', understood in an allegorical way: simply because texture cannot be read as text.[162] Lefebvre's analysis suggests that symbolic representations of space are insufficient to understand social space, and can give the illusion of identifying reality with mental or abstract space. The fact that the floor plan of Oakland Cathedral depicts a fish, or Liverpool Cathedral a tent is insufficient to produce social space where worshipers move, live, and have their being. The *conceived space* of the Cathedral of Évry evokes a tower, a fortress, a chimney, or an arrow pointing towards heaven (Fig. 0.1). The twenty-four lime trees on top might refer to the hours of the day or, more biblically, to the twelve tribes of Israel and the twelve apostles. Its triangular roof might evoke the Trinity. The sanctuary window displays a tree, symbol of the Resurrection (Fig. 1.6). The cathedra or bishop's throne has been given prominence. All this forms part of how one reads and interprets the building.

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160 PE 42 (PS 32–33). Such 'transparency' is thus in reality opaque. The material support of this mental space (paper, screen) is different than the material support of *lived space* (the architectural event). Soja critiques the "egocentric, self-explanatory genius of the 'starchitect' as masterful creator of spaces" and warns against "the image or representation *coming to define and order the reality*. Actual material forms recede into the distance as fixed, dead signifiers emitting signals that are processed, and thus understood and explained when deemed necessary, through the rational (and at times irrational) workings of the human mind." Soja, 79. My emphasis.

161 PE 13–14 (PS 7).

162 PE 255 (PS 221–222).

FIGURE 1.6 Cathedral of the Resurrection, *Évry, France* (*Mario Botta, 1995*). Sunday Eucharist on November 18, 2012

Lefebvre's triad culminates in *lived space*, which he also describes as *spaces of representation*: "Representational space is lived and spoken (*L'espace de représentation se vit, se parle*)."[163] Whereas *perceived space* is the practiced space of the *body*; *conceived space* the clear space of the *mind*; *lived space* is the utopic space that the *imagination* seeks to appropriate, linked to creativity, art, and the clandestine, underground side of life.[164] Dominated by *conceived space*,[165] mysterious *spaces of representation* are produced underground by the users of space who bring to life its transparent *representations*:

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163 This has been translated into: "Representational space is alive: it speaks." However, in what follows we clearly discern a *human* subject: "It has an affective kernel or center: Ego, bed, bedroom, dwelling, house; or: square, church, graveyard. It embraces the loci of passion, of action and of lived situations, and thus immediately implies time. Consequently it may be qualified in various ways: it may be directional, situational, or relational." PE 52 (PS 42).

164 PE 43 (PS 33).

165 "Like all social practice, spatial practice is lived directly before it is conceptualized; but the speculative primacy of the conceived over the lived causes practice to disappear

> *Representational spaces:* space as directly *lived* through its associated images and symbols, and hence the space of 'inhabitants' and 'users,' but also of some artists and perhaps of those, such as a few writers and philosophers, who *describe* and aspire to do no more than describe. This is the dominated – and hence passively experienced – space which the imagination seeks to change and appropriate. It overlays physical space, making symbolic use of its objects. Thus representational spaces may be said, though again with certain exceptions, to tend towards more or less coherent systems of non-verbal symbols and signs.[166]

Whereas *conceived space* tends towards coherent systems of *verbal signs*, *lived space* tends towards non-systematic cohesion of *non-verbal symbols*. In the Cathedral in Évry, *lived space* comes to the fore in the appropriation of the primary 'inhabitants' and 'users', the worshiping community (Fig. 1.6). How does this building foster community? The circular plan could in fact lay more emphasis on the community, but the spatial configuration is strangely still a basilical one, which tends to oppose sanctuary and nave. One wonders if a more centrally placed altar-table would not have been more appropriate in our times.

These three spaces, or dimensions of social space, are related and intertwined. Edward Soja, who names *perceived space* real and *conceived space* imagined, observes that spaces of representation "contain all other real and imagined spaces simultaneously."[167] Meaningfully, he adds: "In different ways, appropriately understood, so too do spatial practices and representations of space, but only in so far as one can escape from the double illusion of objectivism and subjectivism that weakens their insights into the workings of power." Soja concludes that "these lived spaces of representation are thus the terrain for the generation of 'counterspaces', spaces of resistance to the dominant order arising precisely from their subordinate, peripheral or marginalized positioning."[168]

For instance, people bodily 'practice' the *perceived space* of Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C. (1917) for its *conceived space* of freedom, union, and hope, as if enshrined in this Greek temple.[169] On August 28, 1963, this *perceived-conceived*

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along with life, and so does very little justice to the 'unconscious' level of lived experience *per se.*" PE 34 (PS 44).

166 PE 49 (PS 39).

167 Soja, 69.

168 Soja, 68.

169 I am highly indebted to the Australian biblical scholar Mary L. Coloe for providing me with this suggestive example.

construct became the scene for Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. to create in the imagination of hundreds of thousands the *lived space* of his dream. *Lived space* is utopia and heterotopia rooted in *perceived* and *conceived space*.

In a similary way, *tourists* might approach contemporary churches, especially when built by famous 'starchitects' such as Meier's *Jubilee Church* (Figs. 2.8 and 2.9), Moneo's *Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels* (Figs. 4.10–4.12), and Zumthor's *Bruder Klaus Kapelle* (Fig. 1.9) for their *perceived space* of awe and wonder (space and light). *Pilgrims* enter churches primarily for what they stand for, their *conceived space* of meaningful symbolism and Christian identity (word and image). One may hope that the *faithful* go to churches for the communitarian *lived space* produced within *perceived space* and informed by *conceived space*: the expansive Godspace of encounter within the Spirit and biblically named the Kingdom of God and the Body of Christ (dance and garden).

In contemporary church architecture, social space is produced when *lived space* of the imagination (symbolic spaces of dance and garden) is informed by *conceived space* (symbolic representations of word and image) and practiced in *perceived space* (spatial practice of a material place in space and light).

Finally, together with the conceptual triad *perceived, conceived,* and *lived space*, I adopt three principles from Henri Lefebvre's seminal work *The Production of Space* that, as far as I know, has not yet been implemented for the theological analysis of church architecture.

1. *Temporal dynamic*. The first principle is the temporal relationship between the different spaces: the one has to be decrypted out of the former in order to lay bare the *production* or the *emergence* of space. Only in this dynamic can the complex reality of social space be understood.

2. *'Architexture' for the body*. The second principle, which can be retraced all along the heavy metaphoric reading of this "polyphonic fugue" (Casey), is Lefebvre's aversion to the "visual logic," that is, the ideology that a complex reality can be explained by simply decoding what can be seen by reproducing it into another realm. This is why he reproaches the famous architectural historian Erwin Panofsky to explain both thought and architecture by a common "visual logic." Lefebvre argues that such easy correlation overlooks the essential role of the body. He even goes so far as to mention Abelard as the unsurprising "rebellion of the body" within scholasticism, leading to a reconciliation between flesh and spirit through the intervention of the Holy Spirit.[170]

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170 "The role of Abelard, his thought and life, can only be understood in terms of a revolt of the body which certainly went beyond any 'visual logic' – which went as far, in fact, as to anticipate a reconciliation between flesh and spirit effected thanks to the intervention of the Third Person, the Holy Spirit." PE 301 (PS 260).

Unfortunately, he does not develop this intimate connection between space, body, and the Spirit – leaving it to others to do so, with the warning not to reduce space to a visual reality. Architecture is texture and thus cannot be read as a text, but has a different complexity and must be understood by its use. Instead of a classifying *reproduction*, Lefebvre points out the *production* of (social) space in the use of the space. Semiotics based on the visual logic is essential, but cannot fully explain the complex reality of social space. Only attention to its spatial use, starting from the body, can provide a fuller picture. This is the second principle.

3. *Appropriated space*. The third principle follows from the second, and concerns the utopia that Lefebvre calls "appropriated space." Appropriation implies maturation and time.[171] Considering architecture, Lefebvre reproaches most architects for approaching architectural space through the medium of *conceived space* or *representations of space*, which is not the same perspective as the *lived space* of its users.[172] He reveals a fallacy in identifying the ideal, abstract space of minds and maps with true space, whereas the concrete, subjective experience of daily spatial performances of the users is the real and primordial *space of representation*. There is indeed a discrepancy between the discourse about architecture and the lived experience of the buildings themselves. The former, crystallized in articles and marvelous photographic publications, tends towards the abstract and the ideal, perhaps only for the good reason of not forcing an ideological interpretation upon anybody, and of allowing anybody to approach the building for its own sake. Hence, Lefebvre suggests not to *replace* the dominant, visual, transparent, mental, and linear 'phallic space' by a 'uterine counter-space' of play, pleasure, and leisure, but to *reconcile* them in the appropriation of nature, such as in the Alhambra gardens, Loire castles, or Palladio's villas: "The space of leisure *tends* [...] to surmount divisions: the division between social and mental, the division between sensory and intellectual, and also the division between the everyday and the out-of-the-ordinary (festival)."[173] Highly revelatory in this matter is the fact that one does not have "to be a 'connoisseur' in order to experience Venice as festival."

171 PS 164–168.

172 PE 416–419. In this section, Lefebvre makes his point through the binary opposition between the representations of space of *conceived space* and the spaces of representations of *lived space*, both dimensions of the spatial practice of a society.

173 PE 437 (PS 385). "Is a final metamorphosis called for that will reverse all earlier ones, destroying phallic space and replacing it with a 'uterine' space? We can be sure, at any rate, that this in itself will not ensure the invention of a truly appropriated space, or that of an architecture of joy and enjoyment." PE 471 (PS 410).

Its architectural unity embraces "the practical, the symbolic, and the imaginary." Here, we recognize easily Lefebvre's triad *perceived, conceived*, and *lived*.

> In Venice, the *representation of space* (the sea at once dominated and exalted) and *representational space* (exquisite lines, refined pleasures, the sumptuous and cruel dissipation of wealth accumulated by any and every means) are mutually reinforcing. Something similar may be said of the space of the canals and streets, where water and stone create a texture founded on reciprocal reflection.[174]

Its double texture of water and stone, image and reality, measure and madness, everyday life and theatricality, *representation of space* and *space of representation* can only be experienced by *spatial practice* in Venice itself. Venice was not produced as a work of art but grew organically as a garden: "Could it be that the space of the finest cities came into being after the fashion of plants and flowers in a garden?"[175] The garden as a place of leisure is Lefebvre's paradigm for the production of social space.

In conclusion, Lefebvre's triad provides a useful methodological tool to identify three dimensions of relational space. Contemporary church architecture can be understood, not as an empty container, but as the rich phenomenon of three spaces at work: *perceived, conceived*, and *lived space*.

In Search of a Method. Synaesthetic, Kerygmatic, Eucharistic

> An architecture of pleasure and joy, of community in the use of the gifts of the earth, has yet to be invented.
>
> HENRI LEFEBVRE[176]

Building further on Lefebvre's triad, my threefold method for a theological assessment of contemporary church architecture consists of three dimensions (approaching, entering, and appropriating), which correspond to the aforementioned Vitruvian triad (structure, form, and function), the inductive theological method initiated by Flemish Cardinal Jozef Leo Cardijn (1882–1967) for his Young Christian Workers movement (seeing, judging, and acting), and the three terms of the topic at hand (architecture, church, and contemporary).

174 PE 89–90 (PS 73–74).

175 PE 91 (PS 74). The central place of nature in Lefebvre's essay reveals an ecological dimension that, as far as I know, has not yet been pointed out in the literature.

176 PE 379.

Parallels can even be found with the history of salvation (creation, incarnation, and redemption), and with a Trinitarian reading (Spirit, Son, and Father). Unlike nouns, the verbs – approaching, entering, and appropriating – go beyond the tendency to consider architecture as a static *object* and invite the experience of a dynamic *event* involving the individual and communitarian *body*: in order to understand a church, we have to physically approach, enter, and appropriate the building. Moreover, these verbs point out that, in the case of a church, one approaches, enters, and appropriates not only a physical space, but a mystical space as well. From the start, approaching, entering, and appropriating a church is the metaphor for approaching, entering, and appropriating the Mystery above all names.

The *order* in which these three parts are presented here is not necessarily chronological. They correspond rather to three complementary dimensions of one experience, which unfold as diptychs.

The First Diptych: Synaesthetic Space (*Space-Light*). The first step implies to *see* what is, in the words of French phenomenologist Maurice Merleau-Ponty: "The world is what we see, and yet we must learn how to see it."[177] To approach a church requires the openness and willingness to encounter *what is*. In particular, I will develop what such seeing implies in the case of architecture. Obviously, this entails more than the eyes alone – even though architectural experience is still commonly reduced to the hegemony of vision. First we must ask what is proper to *architecture* in inducing a sense of the sacred. *Perceived space* is what comes to the fore when approaching a church, and corresponds with 'seeing' the reality. I will name this *synaesthetic space*, based on the term *synaesthesia* (*sun – aisthesis*), which indicates the union of senses. Instead of the technical definition, "the production of a sense impression relating to one sense or part of the body by stimulation of another sense or part of the body,"[178] I use this term in a broader understanding in order to lay bare that architectural space involves the whole body. I will treat this embodied aspect of the architectural experience in Chapter 3, drawing on phenomenology.

The Second Diptych: Kerygmatic Space (*Word-Image*). The second step entails *interpreting* what is perceived from a symbolic point of view. In relation to the term *church*, I will examine what makes this transcendence or sacredness specifically Christian. With the inheritance of iconoclast modernism, I will argue for instance that the claim for 'sacred emptiness' as defended by the Roman Catholic architect Rudolf Schwarz and the Protestant theologian Paul Tillich is

177 Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Le Visible et l'Invisible* (Paris: Gallimard, 1964), 18.

178 Oxford Dictionaries, http://oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/synaesthesia?q=synaes thesia [accessed February, 13, 2013].

still valid today, but is insufficient. Space, matter, texture, and light are the essential contemporary materials for creating places of interiority. Nevertheless, in order for the anonymous 'sacred' not to remain faceless within a church, on the basis of such sacred emptiness ancient Christian symbols are retrieved today in a dramatic *mise-en-scène* with unseen depth. It has often been critiqued that most contemporary churches do not display their Christian identity within the urban landscape. Hence, contemporary church architecture has to mediate between modernist minimalism and postmodern symbolism, without falling into the extremes of mere emptiness or overloaded iconography. When entering a church, *conceived space* addresses the rational mind seeking to understand what is perceived. This is the mental space interpreting shapes and forms in a dialogical correlation, between what is perceived and what is revealed in Scripture and Tradition – in other words, how places carry spatial forms of meaning. I name this space *kerygmatic space*, based on the term *kerygma* or proclamation. This does not mean that *synaesthetic space* would not be kerygmatic in itself, but it points out – better than 'conceived space' – the relationship with the Mystery, which theology is all about. In other words, by providing a Christian Name (Word) and Face (Image) to the otherwise anonymous and faceless experience, it leads further into the Mystery. We will see that, especially for contemporary church architecture, iconography and iconoclasm belong together as two dimensions of this *kerygma*. I will explore this in Chapter 4.

The Third Diptych: Eucharistic Space (*Dance-Garden*). Finally, church architecture needs to be *enacted* by a community in order to be appropriated. This implies *time* in its sense of duration. I suggest that *contemporariness* in church architecture plays a mediating and healing role between exteriority and interiority today. Its often surprising playfulness, which stretches the celebrative imagination, is essential to understand the sacred today not as *separated* from the profane, but as expression (or presentation) of a Holy One who inhabits and redeems the world. I suggest that spirituality today has primarily to do with the *imagination* and with the community: "How well does the liturgical space reflect the *theological* experience of the community worshiping there?"[179] *Lived space* is what church architecture – and the Mystery encountered – is all about. Consequently, in the particular case of church architecture, I suggest an understanding of 'acting' as 'celebrating'. This verb

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179 Richard S. Vosko, "The Language of Liturgical Space: Archetypes *and* Clichés," in *Proceedings of the North American Academy of Liturgy*, Annual Meeting, San Francisco, California, January 6–9, 2011, ed. Joyce Ann Zimmerman (Notre Dame, IN: North American Academy of Liturgy, 2011), 21–34, at 26.

counters the tendency to narrow the focus down to merely moral action. ‘Celebrating’ does not eschew the *ethical* dimension, which is an essential perspective that has to be taken into account for the consideration of church architecture. Nonetheless, it gives moral action its due place within a celebrative context that is liturgy in its broadest sense (*laos* – *ergon*, the work of the people) – including *eschatological* and *cosmological* dimensions as well. In this sense, Sigurd Bergmann argues:

> Theology in built environments is neither merely about widening the field of theological studies by including buildings and cities, nor about working out apologetic concepts of Christian faith. The challenge is far greater: reflecting on theological criteria for built environments implies at the same time a commitment to contributing to an environment that is worth living in for all human and other beings. A theological aesthetics of architecture always implies also an ethics of a just and sustainable environment for all to live in.[180]

Because my perspective is that of a Roman Catholic open to other Christian points of view, I suggest naming this dimension *Eucharistic space*, which involves much more than the mere space to celebrate the Roman Catholic Eucharist. I understand Eucharistic here in one of its broadest and eschatological senses, as the capacity to transform the world into Kingdom from within. Eucharist is an expansive human and divine interaction with ethical, ecclesiological, and cosmological repercussions. At this juncture, it is sufficient to point out its *communitarian* and *communicative* dimensions. I argue that for church architecture the Banquet is the most central vision of the Kingdom of God. I will explore this in Chapter 5, by suggesting cosmological and eschatological perspectives out of the dynamic ecclesiological configurations of a worshiping community.

In conclusion, these three diptychs together explain the richness of architecture as *mystagogic space*, that is, space that introduces into the Mystery. Let me now explain the importance of case studies for my inductive method.

In Search of Classics. Chapels, Cathedrals, and Churches

> I have wondered whether there is a better symbol of incarnation and redemption than this – that one cherishes the earthy and natural things enough to invest to the limit in them and thus to transform them into

180 Bergmann, *Here*, 14.

> something superlative, without ever changing them into something synthetic or exotic.
>
> EDWARD ANDERS SÖVIK[181]

In these words, after a visit to Japan in 1965, the American Lutheran architect Edward Anders Sövik (1918–2014) pleaded for the ingenuity, asymmetry, earthiness, clarity, and refinement of the Japanese teahouse as a model for church architecture. Sövik provides a thoroughly theological statement about architecture: *incarnation* corresponds to cherishing the earthy and natural things in such a way as to invest to the limit in them, and *redemption* to transforming them into more than they are. Of course, it would be Pelagianism to presume a mere human author for incarnation and redemption.[182] Therefore, in order to respect the existential gap between the divine author of incarnation and redemption and the human creature, Sövik speaks in terms of "symbol." It is remarkable that a Lutheran would use such sacramental terms, especially with Schwebel's aforementioned precautions in mind. We are in need of a symbolic language in order to grasp the meaning of divine mysteries as creation, incarnation and redemption.

The artistic, poetic symbols that Sövik suggests, and which attribute a lot of weight to human creatures, are, in my view, indeed capable of transmitting the divine preference for earthly *matter*, so essential to the Christian doctrine of incarnation, and the understanding of grace as a *transformation* and not a superstructure of nature, so essential to the Christian doctrine of redemption (continuity in discontinuity). At the same time, Sövik points out the inherent dangers of this human endeavor, which consists in finding the right balance, and not succumbing to exotic artificiality. Investing to the limit in earthly matter could be tempted to idolatry. Nevertheless, it is also the sacramental way to encounter the Christian God. In this sense, architecture – as irrelevant as it is – can be a sacramental way to approach, enter, and appropriate the divine Mystery.

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181 Edward Anders Sövik, "Tea and Sincerity," *Liturgical Arts* 37/1 (Nov 1968): 4–7, at 5, quoted in Mark A. Torgerson, *An Architecture of Immanence* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2007), 168.

182 Pelagianism is a Christian heresy named after the monk Pelagius (+420), who argued that it was sufficient for salvation that Jesus Christ was a mere model to be followed. Perfection could be attained by nature without grace. St Augustine vehemently critiqued this position, and won. Incarnation and redemption refer to a divine initiative for the divinization of humankind. They certainly count on our cooperation, but cannot be explained by human source alone.

Because of the insistence on materiality in the theological triad *creation, incarnation,* and *redemption*, my theotopical method proceeds through the extensive analysis of case studies.[183] Each of its three dimensions unfolds as a diptych into two complementary perspectives. These six perspectives correspond to six major case studies because a theological assessment of architecture should not drift loose up in mid-air, but must be conducted in an itinerary *through, with*, and *in* the heart of the matter.[184]

I propose the case studies in this essay as 'classics' of contemporary church architecture, that is, expressions of the human spirit "which are assumed to disclose permanent possibilities of meaning and truth" about our lives in such a way "that we cannot deny them some kind of normative status," involving "a claim to truth as the event of a disclosure-concealment of the whole reality."[185] Their "normative status" does not make them models or types to be imitated literally, but inspiration and, in Tillichian terms, experiments and victories. The American Jesuit Cardinal Avery Dulles has articulated six ecclesiological models for the Church as paradigmatic in pointing out its mysterious nature: the Church as institution, mystical communion, sacrament, herald, servant, and Kingdom.[186] Can architecture provide such models in order to lay bare

183 In opposition to a merely impersonal inventory or *ekphrasis* that describes *what* can be perceived, formal analysis makes a choice in the examination of aspects of the building and asks *how* these aspects give meaning. Formal analysis examines the site, size, shape, materials, ornamentation, colors, acoustics, light, and other aspects of a building. See Sylvan Barnet, *A Short Guide to Writing about Art*, 7th ed. (New York: Longman 2003) and Simon Unwin, *Analysing Architecture* (London: Routledge, 1997).

184 This itinerary is similar to what David Stancliffe did with Portsmouth Cathedral, or Margaret Visser with Sant' Agnese fuori le Mura in Rome. See David Stancliffe, "Creating Sacred Space: Liturgy and Architecture Interacting," in *The Sense of the Sacramental*, edited by David Brown and Ann Loades (London: SPCK, 1995), 44–58, and Margaret Visser, *The Geometry of Love: Space, Time, Mystery, and Meaning in an Ordinary Church* (New York: North Point Press, 2000).

185 Tracy, *Imagination*, 68, 108, 163. See also Frank Burch Brown, *Religious Aesthetics: A Theological Study of Making and Meaning* (London: MacMillan Press, 1990), 168; Viladesau, *Beauty*, 17.

186 Avery Dulles, *Models of the Church*, Image Books (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1974). He uses 'models' instead of dimensions or aspects in order to underline the mystery of the Church, which cannot be put directly into words but is in need of analogical models to be understood. Dulles only speaks of five models, but his following chapter explores eschatological matters, in which I recognize a sixth model after having examined contemporary church architecture. One of the fruits of my book is to have discovered eschatology as an essential dimension, albeit implicit, in the theology (or theotopy) of contemporary church architecture.

what cannot be said directly? Will my six case studies correspond to Dulles's models? This will be no easy correlation, as different models will be recognized in different case studies. Perhaps the richest buildings will be the most multifaceted, revealing different ecclesiological models. In a rapid and superficial overview, one could lay bare the kerygmatic dimension in the *Chapel of Reconciliation* (Figs. 3.2–3.5), the communal dimension in the *Chapel of St Ignatius* (Figs. 3.6–3.8), the institutional dimension in Oakland (Figs. 0.2; 3.10; 4.1; 4.8; 4.9; and 5.15), the eschatological dimension in Los Angeles (Figs. 4.10–4.12), the diaconal dimension in *St Gregory of Nyssa* (Figs. 5.2–5.5), and the sacramental dimension in *St François de Molitor* (Figs. 5.6 and 5.7). These dimensions might be the most obvious at first sight. Nevertheless, it might be more fruitful to discern how all six dimensions are represented in each of the case studies.

Apart from minor references to other church buildings, each of the three parts thus considers two main case studies in a comparative and complementary way. In the appendix, I have listed recent churches according to their genre, whether they are chapels, churches, cathedrals, or monastic churches. It can be argued that smaller *chapels* tend to address the phenomenological (structural) more than the liturgical dimension, that *cathedrals* have a primary intention of communicating the Christian identity within a city (formal), and that *churches* rather than cathedrals propose liturgical reflection in their spatial configuration (functional). Therefore, I have chosen to deal with two chapels in my first, structural, part, to examine two cathedrals in the second, formal, part, and to conclude with two churches in the third, functional, part. Monastic churches are altogether different, as they address mainly an informed public. Hence, they often excel in all three dimensions. Instead of an exclusive attention to but one dimension, it has to be said that all three dimensions are ever-present, albeit less consciously and in differing degrees.

Each case study brings to light one spatial feature that sets the theme for theological discussion. For instance, in the first, *liminality* questions the distinction between secular and sacred space. In the second, *synaesthesis* brings to the fore the embodied nature of theology. In the third, *sacred emptiness* suggests apophatic ways of dealing with transcendence. In the fourth, *symbolism* brings to light the centrality of Incarnation and the sacramental relationship between matter and Spirit. In the fifth, *centering focus* asks about the communitarian nature of celebration. In the last, spatial *orientation* engages the eschatological imagination.

I have chosen the case studies fundamentally for two reasons. First, their *contemporary* character, as an expression of our times, not only excludes the emotional aging patina so characteristic of historical monuments, thus

'purifying' the theological diagnosis, but also substantiates the permanent actuality of and need for theological incarnations. Moreover, my interest concerns the sacredness of *spatial* dimensions of architecture rather than two-dimensional iconography, which abound in more historical churches. On the basis of Modernist minimalism, contemporary churches seem more propitious to discuss the theology of the three-dimensional play of space, texture, and light. Second, they are successful 'victories' in my view, especially because they bring to light spatial features that resonate with a theological issue at stake in our days. For instance, the luminous garden in the last case study brings to the fore not only the current issue of liturgical orientation, but more generally the contemporary need to nourish the eschatological imagination of Christian hope.

Similar to the scholars Richard Kieckhefer and William R. McAlpine, my approach is *interdenominational*, but grounded in my own Roman Catholic tradition and dialoguing with Protestant and Anglican-Episcopalian denominations.[187] Perhaps this needs some further explanation. The fact that my case studies include church architecture from other Christian denominations might give the impression that my approach is *ecumenical*. My intention, however, is not to develop an ecumenical theology of architecture, but to deepen the Roman Catholic perspective in openness to other denominations. For instance, I will treat Protestant churches with respect to their theology instead of forcing upon them a Roman Catholic viewpoint about our relationship with God. Nevertheless, the ground for doing so will be Roman Catholic, considering the Eucharist as the "source and summit" of Christian life (LG 11), due to the divine encounter in the Spirit. From a Roman Catholic perspective, there are fundamentally four places during the Eucharistic liturgy where God can sacramentally be encountered through Christ in the Spirit: in the minister, the Eucharistic species, the Word, and the worshiping assembly (SC 7). In this book, it is my intention to lay bare how architecture enhances or inhibits the experience of this fourfold presence of Christ. Hence, my emphasis is not on the sacramental encounter itself and its theological nuances in the different denominations, but on the influence of the architecture, which is sacramental only in a derived sense. In unfolding architectural space as *synaesthetic*, *kerygmatic*, and *Eucharistic*, I aim to lay bare how architecture

187 McAlpine dialogues with the Roman Catholic tradition out of his own Protestant background: see William R. McAlpine, *Sacred Space for the Missional Church: Engaging Culture Through the Built Environment* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2011), x. I do not examine textual and architectural sources in other traditions as the Oriental, Orthodox, Baptist, Evangelical megachurches, and sectarian movements.

prepares the ground for an encounter in the Spirit – whether this is sacramental according to the different denominations or not. On the one hand, I will draw on various Protestant scholars for whom the building is not a mere container for liturgical action. On the other hand, even recent Protestant projects demonstrate a refined search for an architectural 'sacramentality', if I may say so, as shown in the United Reformed *Lumen Church* in London (Figs. 1.10, 4.5).[188]

Remarkably, Protestant and Episcopalian case studies demonstrate what I intend to indicate with the term *Eucharistic space* in its broadest meaning of emphasizing community and communion. The *Lumen Church* shows this in its café and *St Gregory of Nyssa Episcopal Church* in its food pantry on Fridays (Fig. 5.5). The Roman Catholic *St Theodor* in Köln-Vingst (2002) shows a similar diaconal dimension of *Eucharistic space* in its 'underground church', where the parish redistributes food and goods for the less wealthy (Figs. 1.7 and 1.8). With this broad sense of *Eucharistic space*, I do not mean to play down the Roman Catholic sacramental theology of the Eucharist, but to place it in a broader context, drawing on what the German Protestant scholars Andrea Bieler and Luise Schottroff have called "sacramental permeability."[189]

As such, the itinerary takes us from the broadest sense of transcendence to the most defined (or Roman Catholic). Chapels could be said to address the broadest of publics, including occasional visitors, tourists, and pilgrims, as clearly indicated by the increasing visits to one of the smallest of buildings, lost in the fields of Wachendorf by the 'starchitect' Zumthor (Fig. 1.9), or by Le Corbusier's ever popular *Notre-Dame du Haut* at Ronchamp (Fig. 2.3). Moreover, often freed from its communitarian and liturgical dimensions, chapels are propitious to display an anonymous sense of transcendence, engaging anybody through their *synaesthetic space*, and correspond to Dulles' communal and sacramental models. Cathedrals do also address a more general, non-Christian public, due to their hierarchical status and presence within the contemporary city. Their mammoth size and liturgical brief often impede the pure workings of *synaesthetic space* as displayed in chapels. Because they intend to attract – perhaps not as presumptuously as many as their historic forebears do nowadays – non-believers, to whom they aim to communicate the Christian faith, their

188 The United Reformed Church, of Calvinist orientation, was born in 1972 Great Britain out of the union of the Congregational Church an the Presbyterian Church of England. In 1981, the Churches of Christ joined as well. See http://www.urc.org.uk/ and http://www.lumenurc.org.uk/index.htm [accessed March, 26, 2013].

189 Andrea Bieler and Luise Schottroff, *The Eucharist: Bodies, Bread, and Resurrection* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2007), 15–48.

FIGURE 1.7 St Theodor, *Köln-Vingst, Germany* (*Paul Böhm, 2002*). *Interior*

FIGURE 1.8 St Theodor, *Köln-Vingst, Germany* (*Paul Böhm, 2002*). *'Underground' church for distributing goods*

FIGURE 1.9 Bruder Klaus Kapelle, *Mechernich-Wachendorf, Germany* (*Peter Zumthor, 2007*). *Interior*

main focus can be said to be *kerygmatic space*, and they thus correspond to Dulles's kerygmatic and institutional models. Finally, addressing ongoing, faithful worshiping communities, parish churches are perhaps more hidden and less visited by a non-Christian public – apart from the buildings that the American

architectural theorist Charles Jencks fittingly called "iconic."[190] Their attention can thus unabashedly go to *Eucharistic space*, and Dulles's diaconal and eschatological models. It is certainly here, in these humble parish communities (and less in chapels and cathedrals), that the present and the future of the Church are being written in the West – the geographical scope of this book. In order to conclude on a hopeful ecclesiological note, it is here, in these local communities, that the universal Church becomes *lived space*.

The aim of this research is not primarily to provide a list of theological or liturgical criteria to submit to any contemporary church. This may be one of its fruits, but it is not my main focus. This has been done sufficiently in recent literature.[191] More important from the perspective of a systematic theologian seems to me to lay bare the inherent *theological potential* of architecture for whoever wants to approach, enter, and appropriate this experience – that is, the *epistemological* question concerning the status of architecture as non-verbal theology. This is the question of fundamental theology at the basis of my research: to guide an itinerary from the experience of place to an experience of Spirit, maintaining *experience* in its center – so as to "make a defense to any one who calls you to account for the hope that is in you." (1 Pe 3:15) The whole point of the book is to examine how human places lead into the divine Spirit, drawing on the term 'space' as their intimate correlation. The point of this itinerary *in Deum*[192] is to discover within the *synaesthetic* experience of architecture a *kerygmatic* dimension that provides a *Eucharistic* understanding of the world. In my itinerary, aesthetics precedes ethics, as Bergmann has argued when asking:

> How is our human bodily being given priority as the first living space that dwells in cosmic, natural, and built environments? Could architecture help to build an 'authentic utopia based on memory' (H. Marcuse) and to create an 'oasis' (K. Frampton) from where the liberation of creation can expand? How does God take place on earth?[193]

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190 See, for instance, Charles Jencks, *The Story of Post-Modernism: Five Decades of the Ironic, Iconic, and Critical in Architecture* (London/New York: John Wiley & Sons, 2011).

191 Steven Joseph Schloeder, *Architecture in Communion: Implementing the Second Vatican Council through Liturgy and Architecture* (San Francisco, CA: Ignatius Press, 1998).

192 I refer to Saint Bonaventure's famous *Itinerarium mentis in Deum* in order to lay bare the spiritual dimension of this trajectory.

193 Bergmann, *Here*, 15.

Furthermore, I would add, we dwell in the divine environment of the Holy Spirit as expansive 'space of encounter'. The end of the itinerary will be to arrive at the same initial position, but now enriched with a deeper understanding of this experience. It is preferable to begin this endeavor with an example of smallness. That is why I end this chapter by presenting three of the smallest interventions of contemporary church architecture, applying them to my threefold method before proceeding to a *status quaestionis* in the next chapter.

Synaesthetic: Bruder Klaus Kapelle (Peter Zumthor, 2007)

The Swiss architect Peter Zumthor, who became well-known for the disarming sensuousness of his thermal baths in Vals, designed two contrasting chapels: the light, bright, and wooden *Chapel of St Benedict* in Sumvitg (1989) and the earthy, dark, and concrete *Bruder Klaus Kapelle* at Mechernich-Wachendorf (2007) (Fig. 1.9).[194]

The latter gives a striking illustration of the haptic realm of *synaesthetic space*. Zumthor is highly attentive to the material presence of all that surrounds him. In highlighting the skin of materials and attuning them to each other, matter can be appropriated emotionally, "transforming real substances into human sensations."[195] Lost in a field, only reachable by foot, this private chapel dedicated to the mystic saint Nikolaus von Flüe (1417–1487) was built by a farmer's family in gratitude for life. In contrast to Zumthor's preference for "buildings that stand in the landscape like sculptures and yet also seem to grow out of it,"[196] this concrete landmark stands somewhat awkwardly and disturbingly in the curved natural landscape. Inside, the contrast is astonishing. Drawing on a suggestive distinction by the American architectural critic Paul Goldberger, I would say that Zumthor "abstracts" nature instead of creating a window on nature.[197] After passing the triangular heavy steel door and a dark corridor, one stands in a tent-like grotto open to the sky. It was raining, the afternoon that I was among the few visitors who came to taste a piece of architecture, and a shallow pool in the form of a huge raindrop had formed in

194 Information on this private chapel, open six days a week from 10 am–4 pm, can be found on www.feldkapelle.de.

195 Peter Zumthor, *Thinking Architecture* (Basel: Birkhäuser, 2010 (1999)), 85.

196 Peter Zumthor, *Atmospheres* (Basel: Birkhäuser, 2006), 100.

197 See Paul Goldberger's clarifying distinction between Tadao Ando and Fay Jones in Paul Goldberger, "Epilogue: On the Relevance of Sacred Architecture Today," in *Constructing the Ineffable: Contemporary Sacred Architecture,* ed. Karla Cavarra Britton (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2010), 222–231, at 228.

the leaden floor. Zumthor arranged more than one hundred trees in the shape of a tipi, around which he poured concrete in subsequent layers of 50 cm before burning the trees. They left strange dark and hollow marks in the grainy walls.

A small bronze bust of the saint and a bronze Trinitarian symbol inspired by his mystical writings are the only sculptural elements that shape the chapel into a Christian space.[198] A small wooden bench invites one to sit a while in silence, contemplating the light falling through the 350 holes that perforate the rough walls like stars in the night, or the raindrops playfully tickling the pool beneath the skylight. The air is humid, and one smells the small beeswax candles. Four elements are joined together in a haptic celebration: water, air, fire, and earthy walls with the hollow marks of the trees. The place feels crowded when there are more than eight people inside.

This architectural statement made of 'hard' materials is religious in its haptic plasticity. Its *Spiritus loci*, characterized by the *grainy* walls that leaves palpable human and natural traces, provokes an *uplifting and inward movement* and allow a deep inner contact between body, building, and (abstracted) cosmos. The chapel abstracts light and stillness from its environment. Light has been abstracted to its purest sense of a transcendent source. The building plays with this basic tension between light and darkness. In the *Lumen Church* in London, a similar cone of light is expression of divine transcendence that becomes palpable in our world, but its antiseptic white walls engage the body far less (Figs. 1.10, 4.5). In contrast, in buildings with a strong haptic quality, one becomes aware of one's own embodied self. *Synaesthetic space* is thus a 'machine' of self-awareness embedded in a cosmic realm: through the awareness of matter and body, one becomes aware of the spiritual density of matter.

Kerygmatic: Capela de Santa Filomena (Pedro Mauricio Borges, 2008)

Since the modernist iconoclasm of the twentieth century, contemporary churches seem to be in crisis of symbols. A poignant example for this can be

198 These symbols are part of the chapel's *kerygmatic space.* Outside, above the door, a small cross reveals its spiritual function as a chapel for private prayer. During the summer afternoon that I visited the place, twenty people came along, in reverence of a starchitect, architecture, creation, and/or the Creator – who knows? The guestbook revealed numerous provenances of visitors who had eagerly written their impressions of the building and their praise of its starchitect, leaving its spiritual dimension respectfully or unconsciously unsaid.

FIGURE 1.10 Lumen church, *London, UK* (*Theis and Kahn, 2008*). Ray of light

found in the rural Figueira da Foz in Portugal. The *Capela de Santa Filomena* (2004–2008), designed by Pedro Mauricio Borges, comes across as a small Modernist white box with sharp edges, fallen from the sky like a strange meteorite, somewhat awkwardly attempting to feel at home in the midst of a more organic and rural way of life. In spite of its prominent place at a much

frequented crossroads, this unsolicited newcomer still looks too fresh, too young, and too inflexible to be easily accepted by the local inhabitants, and has patiently to wait for some aging patina in order to find its place. It clearly displays two main functions, namely providing worship space on the inside and staging a kitsch simulacrum of the Sacred Heart on the outside. This statue can be turned around to face the worshiping crowd, but, in spite of its similarities, it is profoundly different to Le Corbusier's staging of a seventeenth-century statue of the Virgin in Ronchamp (Fig. 2.3)! What could have been an archetype degrades into a cliché. Whereas the contrast between the rural environment and the fashion-store box is razor-sharp, the gap between the theatrical box and its kitsch treasures is simply shocking – what could in the best case be interpreted as humor, but again a disgracefully conceptual humor proclaiming that this is "no place for God" (Doorly).

Whereas the building clearly claims to be a bold statement of contemporary architecture in an unwelcoming environment, and as such a legitimate artistic symbol of progress and unabashed novelty, it cannot do more than be a self-conscious dramatic stage for dated signs of past times, which do not have the same artistic power as the fashion envelope. How different the same place would be filled with great, even historical, figurative art! This experiment at Figueira da Foz, in my view an aesthetic and theological failure, could be called 'postmodern' in the negative sense, that is, as the style that comes after and in the line of modernism, and still is modernist in a way, but a disoriented modernism, without vision or hope. It is still modernist because it is an arrogant white box of hard and clean materials, disengaged from the human body and frailty, perfect in its geometry, rooted in concepts and in the mind, and creating an unworldly space separated from the real world. It is unable to be a symbol of transcendence itself, and thus depends entirely and servilely on the quality of the objects it stores: it is not more than a pretty showcase for objects, not for presences (divine and human).

Thus, as a mere finger exercise for architects, this tiny chapel is a shame for humanity and theologically inadequate for our times. It fails to be the theological symbol of transcendence that is so needed today. If this chapel would not only be an artistic symbol of progress, but also a theological symbol of transcendence, and not depend so much on the objects it contains for creating lived space, it would not only be an artistic success but also a theological victory of the human and divine spirit. In my diagnosis, this chapel, perhaps a representative sign of the Church in our times, is unfortunately not apt to be an expressive symbol, and thus deemed to age very quickly, unlike the great symbols of all times, most recently Ronchamp and *St Laurentius* (1955) (Fig. 2.2).

Eucharistic: Lumen Church (Theis and Kahn, 2008)

From the point of view of *synaesthetic space*, most prominent in the *Lumen Church* in London-Bloomsbury (an intervention by Theis and Kahn) is the impressive *Ray of Light*, a white cone that divides the rather tedious 1966 church from Courtenay Theobald into café, sacred space, and worship space (Figs. 1.10, 4.5). Where the cone penetrates the ceiling, the architects placed glass, which lifts up the gaze. The café is clearly visible from the street through a huge window. The cone is pivotal space between secular and sacred space for communitarian gatherings. From the point of view of *kerygmatic space*, this cone is the archetypal tent, shelter, or ray of light as a visible reminder of God as divine Light, giving the church its name. The worship space displays a colorful stained glass window (François Pierre Fourmaintraux, 1966). From the point of view of *Eucharistic space*, next to the worship space for liturgical gatherings, the café has a "Eucharistic" dimension in fostering human and pastoral encounters. The Ray of Light can be used as contemplative 'prayroom' or children's playroom. In conclusion, the *Ray of Light* is a surprising element of transcendence in a Protestant church. Architectural genius is made visible when one simple architectural intervention creates at once three new spatial events.

FIGURE 2.1 Fronleichnamskirche, *Aachen, Germany* (*Rudolf Schwarz, 1930*)

CHAPTER 2

Fifty Shades of Gray

Status Quaestionis

> For the celebration of the Lord's supper a moderately large, well-proportioned room is needed, in its center a table and on the table a bowl of bread and a cup of wine. The table may be decorated with candles and surrounded by seats for the congregation. That is all. Table, space and walls make up the simplest church.
>
> RUDOLF SCHWARZ[1]

With such a simple statement, the German Roman Catholic architect Rudolf Schwarz (1897–1961) had started his primer for church building in a time marked by Modernist architecture and liturgical renewal. The aim of this chapter is to situate my research within the context of the recent literature concerning theological questions of church architecture, by basically providing a state of the question. I argue that in the last two decades church buildings seek to express the sacred and induce a contemplative dimension of interiority in a new way, on the basis of twentieth-century acquisitions that put an emphasis on the assembly. Such a bold claim stands in sharp contrast to the well-known reproach to churches of the twentieth century, designed to function merely as meeting halls without any transcendent reference, as if architectural modernism and sacredness were incompatible.

The main discussions in the most recent conferences and publications on sacred space evolve around the issue of the sacred. Traditionally, the sacred is expressed by separating a specific space from the ordinary, which thus becomes 'profane', facing the holy (*pro-fanum*).[2] In the past two decades, contemporary church architecture has seen an extraordinary array of styles, shapes, and shades, eliciting opposing responses from vital enthusiasm to harsh disapproval. The most prominent today are the witty shapes that one does not immediately associate with a church. For one who dares to engage in the muddy field where theology overlaps with architecture, this arena might appear an unknown gray zone, in which some paths have recently being laid

1 Rudolf Schwarz, *The Church Incarnate: The Sacred Function of Christian Architecture,* trans. Cynthia Harris (Chicago: Henry Regnery Co., 1958), 35.

2 See Mircea Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion*, trans. Willard R. Trask (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1961.

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FIGURE 2.2 St Laurentius, *München, Germany* (*Emil Steffann, 1955*)

out, but of which one is never sure where they might lead. Whereas studies of twentieth-century church architecture abound, retracing its roots in architectural Modernism and the Liturgical Movement, rare are the systematic treatments of twenty-first-century church architecture.

This chapter has three parts. First of all, the threefold method that I propose to theologically assess contemporary church architecture has to be placed within its historical context. Contemporary church architecture in a postmodern age is the direct heir of the marriage between the Liturgical Movement, with its emphasis on the assembly, and twentieth-century modernist architecture (the so-called *International Style*), which the American architectural critic Charles Jencks (1939) presented as a new iconoclasm.[3] Therefore, I will briefly present twentieth-century church architecture, which the American Evangelical theologian Mark Allen Torgerson accurately has named "an architecture of immanence." This will be the background for the current historicist critique and appeal for a return to transcendence, whose arguments I will expound in a second section. Finally, in line with this legitimate critique, but avoiding their historicist solutions, I will formulate my hypothesis that the

3 Charles Jencks, *What is Post-Modernism?* 4th ed. (London: Academy Books, 1996), 22.

most recent churches seek to be "an architecture of transcendence." As a consequence, small pilgrim places such as the *Chapel of Reconciliation* in Berlin (2000) (Figs. 3.2–3.5), the *Bruder Klaus Kapelle* in Mechernich (2007) (Fig. 1.9), the *Dominican Chapel* in Louvain-la-Neuve (2010) (Fig. 1.1), the *Pilgrim chapel* in Westvleteren (2012) (Fig. 3.1), and the *Kamppi Chapel* in Helsinki (2012) might well be the paradigmatic church models of our times, just as the cathedral was in the Middle Ages, the abbey church in the Cistercian period, the urban church in the Baroque, and the hospitable suburban church in the twentieth century.

20th-Century *Domus Ecclesiae*: Architecture of Immanence

> Far better the white-washed barn which derives its purpose from a worthy altar, set in the right place, than the pretentious structure, lavishly adorned within and without with sculpture, mosaic, painting and stained-glass, which ignores its own fundamental *raison d'être* and that of the *ecclesia* whose house it is.
>
> PETER HAMMOND[4]

In one of the recent studies on the theology of church architecture, the American Evangelical scholar Mark Allen Torgerson focuses on Western church architecture from the 1920s to the 1980s as the manifestation of "an architecture of immanence."[5] Whereas transcendence indicates divine presence *beyond* people (*domus Dei*), immanence emphasizes divine presence *within* the gathered community (*domus ecclesiae*) that I also recognize in the thought of Benedictine scholar Dom R. Kevin Seasoltz.[6] Both aspects of revelation (beyond/within) should not be disconnected, because the Mystery is revealed *for* people. The Christian God, revealed by Jesus Christ in the Spirit, is transcendent *and* immanent: God is immanent *as transcendence* and transcendent *as immanence*.[7] Non-verbal theology (as the best church architecture

4 Peter Hammond, *Liturgy and Architecture* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1961), 28.

5 Mark A. Torgerson, *An Architecture of Immanence: Architecture for Worship and Ministry Today* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2007), x.

6 Seasoltz sketches the history of sacred art and architecture in search for a contemporary answer to the need to express "both transcendence and immanence, transcendence and community." In this sense, immanence corresponds to community. R. Kevin Seasoltz, "Transcendence and Immanence in Sacred Art and Architecture," *Worship* 75/5 (September 2001): 403–431, at 406.

7 Henri de Lubac, *La révélation divine* (Paris: Cerf, 1983).

is meant to be) can offer a plethora of creative and imaginative expressions for this theological paradox. Ronchamp is an excellent example of the paradox between transcendence and immanence that defies the times, and is thus (in Tracy's terms) a 'classic' for modern architecture and for church building alike, despite its long history of criticism.

Nevertheless, even though Torgerson names this paradox between divine immanence and transcendence, he tends to favor only the pole of immanence, and affirms that, due to human limitation and "the static nature of material objects, it may be easier to articulate one end of the transcendence and immanence scale more effectively in built form."[8] On the contrary, whereas the paradox is not easily grasped in verbal terms, I believe that nonverbal theology has an advantage over verbal theology in creating true spaces for the encounter with the Incarnate Logos, which are fruit of the earth and work of human hands. It is important to realize at all times the nature of our dealing with paradoxes, namely that we tend to reduce paradoxes to one of their poles. On the one hand, an inadequate understanding of immanence would be the – legitimately critiqued by Rose, Doorly, and McNamara as we will see in the next section – cozy carpeted community rooms of the sixties, very different than the paradigmatic experience at Rothenfels. On the other hand, their historicist proposals are equally inadequate understandings of divine transcendence.

Immanence and transcendence relate as a paradox, of which the architectural expression will tend to one of the two poles: whereas monumental churches tend to minimize God's immanence in favor of mystery, multipurpose buildings tend to maximize it. However, "the articulation of church space does not exist without theological context and ritual intention. The architectural design alone will not determine a sense of God's transcendence or immanence."[9] According to Torgerson, an architecture of immanence emphasizes the assembly, and creates functional, bright, and hospitable rooms of a small scale, with limited ornament, in contrast with the large scale, dimmed light, and rich symbolism of a *domus Dei*. This last comment needs two nuances. First, it stands in sharp contrast to the awe-inspiring experience of *Thomas von Aquin* in Berlin or Schwarz's and Guardini's understanding of the *Fronleichnamskirche* in Aachen (Fig. 2.1). Sacred emptiness can be a strong symbol of transcendence, especially because there are no visible distractions. Similarly, I am equally surprised that Torgerson includes Cistercian architecture as an exponent of an architecture of immanence: in my view, its bare

8 Torgerson, *Ibid.*, 3–5, 10.

9 Ibid., 6.

simplicity is a successful architectural symbol of divine mystery.[10] Second, the effect of the depicted saints in *Our Lady of the Angels* in Los Angeles (Fig. 4.12) and in *St Gregory of Nyssa* in San Francisco (Fig. 5.5) demonstrates the nearness and immanence of an invisible realm. Symbols and images do not necessarily put us at a distance, but instead bring us closer to God.

Based on theological and historical roots and concrete case studies, Torgerson's study is an attempt to chart this initiation and development of an architecture of immanence as a proper 20th-century architectural style, valid along the line of the historical styles as a particular expression and understanding of the relationship between God and the world. He claims that we have gained enough distance now to acknowledge such a proper style, born in the confluence between the ecumenical movement, liturgical renewal, and architectural modernism. He also finds roots in Protestant liberal theology. My own study proposes to take up the point where Torgerson left it, and argues for the perception and the need of a new 'style' after an architecture of immanence, announced by Torgerson.[11] Instead of a reactionary return to a traditional 'architecture of transcendence' or *domus Dei*, I suggest naming the buildings that succeed in holding together the paradox of transcendence and immanence *templum Spiritus*. In other words, *templa Spiritus* are buildings that are *domus ecclesiae* in their *Eucharistic space* and *domus Dei* in their *synaesthetic space.* First, let me briefly survey the publications of the twentieth century that can be called on to promote an architecture of immanence.

In the 1960s and 1970s, several groundbreaking essays were published on the theology of architecture. They all pleaded for a recovery of the *domus ecclesiae* based upon "a return to the land of the early church."[12] I distinguish between Anglican, Protestant, and Roman Catholic perspectives. From an Anglican perspective, Peter Hammond published *Liturgy and Architecture* (1960) and edited *Towards a Contemporary Architecture* (1962), and John Gordon Davies wrote *The Secular Use of Church Buildings* (1968). From a Protestant perspective, worth mentioning are James F. White's *Protestant Worship and Church Architecture* (1964), André Biéler's *Architecture in Worship* (1965), Edward Anders Sövik's essay *Architecture for Worship* (1973), Harold W. Turner's *From Temple to Meeting House* (1979), and Paul Tillich's essays collected in *On Art and Architecture* (1987). From a Roman Catholic perspective,

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10 "Aspects of early Christian, Cistercian, Reformation, and Puritan architecture have been said to convey significant reminders of God's immanence." Ibid., 205.

11 Ibid., xii.

12 Edward Anders Sövik, *Architecture for Worship* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Publishing House, 1973), 67.

we should mention Louis Bouyer's *Liturgy and Architecture* (1967), Geert Bekaert's *In een of ander huis* (1967), and Dom Frédéric Debuyst's *Modern Architecture and Christian Celebration* (1968), and the collective *Espace sacré et architecture moderne* (1971). To this list we might add the following works from the eighties: Dennis McNally's *Sacred Space: An Aesthetic for the Liturgical Environment* (1985) and James F. White and Susan J. White's *Church Architecture* (1988).

The acquisitions of the *domus ecclesiae*-model are essential for building my own hypothesis of contemporary churches as an architecture of transcendence. In my view, the historicist critique does not sufficiently take into account the necessary dialectic between *domus Dei* and *domus ecclesiae*, in favor of the former. Therefore, in this section I will briefly expound three representatives of an architecture of immanence, namely the Anglican Peter Hammond, the Roman Catholic Dom Frédéric Debuyst, and the Lutheran Edward Anders Sövik.

Naked before God

> We want *churches*, not museums of religious art. The basic need is for *architecture* to recover its symbolic function.
>
> The task of the modern architect is not to design a building that *looks like a church.* It is to create a building that *works* as a place for liturgy. The first and essential requirement is radical functional analysis.
>
> PETER HAMMOND[13]

In 1960, the British Anglican scholar Peter Hammond (1921–1999) published a groundbreaking essay on theology and architecture inspired by the unsatisfactory character of the many publications that ignore theological issues and the "modish and gimmick-ridden pavilions of religious art" that were hastily built in Great Britain after World War II, in contrast with what he considered more inspiring churches in Germany and France.[14] Hammond pleaded for modest *domus*

13 Peter Hammond, *Liturgy and Architecture* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1961), 161 and 9.

14 Ibid., xiii. Simply put, contemporary styles cannot be excluded: "If the principles of the modern movement are valid for the construction of a school or a factory, they are equally valid for the making of churches. We cannot have a double standard." Hammond dismisses both uncritical historicism and superficial novelty as anachronism. It is not a contemporary varnish that makes a church contemporary, but its layout, capable of embodying a contemporary understanding of the Christian mystery. Because he favors function over style, he critiques Coventry Cathedral as being of this 'varnished' type and

ecclesiae in reaction to the monumental, historicist architecture of his time: "It is better to come before God naked than in period costume," because "pathetic essays in period costume or 'contemporary' fancy-dress [...] obscure the nature of the *ecclesia* itself and of the gospel which it is called to proclaim and make manifest." In a tone that sounds astonishingly actual, he adds that the unbeliever might conclude "that the Church no longer has anything useful to contribute to a society which is totally unimpressed by ecclesiastical rhetoric." How can we "preach about the relevance of the Christian faith to modern society in buildings which, far more eloquently than any sermon, assert the contrary"[15]? But a *domus ecclesiae* must also be a *domus Dei*, a symbol for what the Church is and believes:

> Sacred art must do far more than provoke an aesthetic or emotional *frisson.* Its function is to make manifest under the form of sign and symbol the presence of the New Creation – that new order of reality which entered into the cosmos as the fruit of Christ's strange work. The decay of sacred art into religious art, a language of energetic symbols into a mawkish sentimentality, is symptomatic of a growing blindness: the transformation of contemplation and communion into aestheticism.[16]

Hammond argued for a living architecture "firmly rooted in tradition and yet wholly of its time," "an architecture that is capable of becoming a vital factor not merely in the reform of the liturgy but, through the renewal of the Church's common prayer, in the transformation of the whole life of the Christian

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acclaims both Schwarz's *Fronleichnamskirche* and the revivalist *St Swithun* at Kennington for their theological suitability of housing the mystical body of Christ. He also hails Alison and Peter Smithson's futuristic and imaginative, albeit dismissed project for Coventry Cathedral (1951). Ronchamp is for him "probably the most completely satisfying modern church which has been built in any country: though its effect upon the work of lesser architects promises to be catastrophic; a rash of random windows already extends from Berlin to Tokyo." He acclaims the "Christian poverty" of Rainer Senn's chapel of St André-de-Nice as a prophetic sign against the pauperism of much churches because "it is an outward embodiment of a community which has nothing and which yet possesses all things, a true image of the temple built of living stones." Ibid. 164.

15 Ibid., 157, 167–168. Notice that Hammond not only reacts against historicism, but against arbitrary novelty as well: "The commonest type of aberration is that which results from the desire to exploit new structural forms for their own sake, or to pursue a program of plastic research as an end in itself. The outcome is often very exciting from a purely aesthetic standpoint; unfortunately the success or failure of a church, as of any other building, has to be judged in the light of other than purely aesthetic criteria." Ibid., 81.

16 Ibid., 160–161.

community,"[17] based on new building techniques and a theological recovery of the liturgical meaning of *ecclesia*. For Hammond, for whom the problem is theological rather than architectural,[18] there are but two theological fundamentals that an architect has to keep in balance, the common priesthood of the faithful and the diversity of liturgical functions:

> The first essential is that the altar should be in the right place; that the relationship between the ministers at the altar and the whole body of the faithful, as well as between the font, the table of sacrifice and the place for the proclamation of the word, should manifest the true character of the Church as a eucharistic community, and of the liturgy as a communal service in which *all* are active participants. If these conditions are fulfilled, if the layout of the church is governed by an adequate theological programme, and if the building is an honest piece of construction, free from sham and irrelevant ornament, then its symbolic aspect can be left to take care of itself.[19]

Hammond would reject all other symbolism that has not directly to do with these theological fundamentals, and which I would classify under *conceived space*: the rhetoric and conventional symbols which have lost their meaning, or the overall shape of the church in the form of a fish or an Alpha and Omega. This type of symbolism, although "perfectly legitimate in two-dimensional arts such as painting or mosaic, is entirely inappropriate where architecture is concerned."[20] A good plan, he adds, will not be sufficient to create a satisfactory church.[21] Therefore, he argues: "A church will take on the nature of a symbol only in so far as its plan and structure are informed by a genuine understanding of the nature of the Christian community and its liturgy."[22]

> One cannot turn a hall into a church by sticking a monumental cross on the east wall, or by commissioning a celebrated artist to paint a mural in

17 Ibid., 173.

18 Ibid., 11. Compare with: "In fact more architects should say 'no' to a church until the Church is ready to say 'yes' to its responsibility for rethinking its faith and life and work." The American Congregationalist theologian Marvin Halverson, "On Getting Good Architecture for the Church," in J.N. Shear, ed. *Religious Buildings for Today* (New York: F.W. Dodge Corporation, 1957), 3f., quoted in Hammond, *Liturgy*, 10–11.

19 Ibid., 30.

20 Ibid., 82.

21 Ibid., 155.

22 Ibid., 30.

> the Lady chapel. The church must be a symbolic structure: it must be informed from the outset by a theological understanding of its purpose. [...] The church will take on the nature of a symbol only in so far as the architect understands its *raison d'être.* [...] The Church must, so to speak, take flesh, be made incarnate, in stone, glass and concrete, as well as in the persons of those who are incorporated into Christ.[23]

In terms that remind us of Valéry's metaphor of "singing" architecture, Hammond deplores that "for the most part the chord within us remains unstruck, the axis is not touched. Heaven and earth still meet in the holy mysteries but the joy and wonder of this intercourse must be apprehended by faith alone, the setting of this mysterious traffic remains earthbound. Where an architect has attempted to venture beyond the simple provision of adequate accommodation for a given ritual he has usually lapsed into rhetoric and falsehood, or taken refuge in conventional symbols which no longer communicate their meaning."[24] In my words, for Hammond, the symbolism of *kerygmatic space* or the way that the church is *domus Dei* should not come from arbitrariness or added ornament, but from a honest and modest *Eucharistic space*, that is, how the church is a living *domus ecclesiae.*

Christian Genius Loci

> In order to understand what is meant by the Christian *genius loci*, one should accentuate the surprising convergence of proximity and distance, of nobility and simplicity – the fact that the Christian sacred is always intimately bound to the mystery of the Person and of the persons.
>
> FRÉDÉRIC DEBUYST[25]

The Belgian Benedictine Dom Frédéric Debuyst (1929) is the epitome of *domus ecclesiae*-thought based on the Liturgical Movement. He became famous through his essays *Modern Architecture and Christian Celebration* (1968) and *Le génie chrétien du lieu* (1997).[26] Reflections on church architecture must be

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23 Ibid., 155.

24 Ibid., 155–156.

25 Frédéric Debuyst, *Le génie chrétien du lieu* (Paris: Cerf, 1997), 49–50. He refers to the Christian *genius loci* of historical churches in Rome.

26 Dom Frédéric Debuyst OSB is a Belgian Benedictine monk of the abbey Saint-André at Clerlande in Belgium. From 1959 to 1980 he was the editor of *Art d'Église.* His bibliography on twentieth-century architecture includes *Modern Architecture and Christian Celebration* (London: Lutterworth, 1968); *Le génie chrétien du lieu* (Paris: Cerf, 1997); and *Dix petites*

centered on *celebration*. In this, Debuyst and Hammond coincide.[27] However, Debuyst goes further in examining the *anthropological* roots of liturgy: he defines human beings as "created for jubilation, capable of celebrating in a specific and expressive way the main events and the mysterious greatness of his existence and, in so doing, of already tasting some of the joys of eternal life."[28] Celebration is exceptional, anticipative, anamnetic, symbolic, affirmative, sacrificial, and inclusive: it "breaks up our normal pattern of time and space, opens a window in the wall of our daily life and invites us into a world where the rules, the conventions and the values are new and different"; its *expectative* preparation is part of the celebration itself; a satisfactory conclusion allows authentic *remembrance*; it is the symbolic *expression* of an important value beyond material reality; it is saying *yes* or *amen* to life; at the same time it is associated with *sacrifice*, understood as the renunciation of the conventions and values of ordinary time and space; and it includes *everyone* and *everything*: the face of a stranger at a feast is sacred, being potentially a friend or brother.[29] Can church architecture enhance the festive character of our celebration?

églises pour aujourd'hui, Cahiers de Clerlande 8 (Ottignies: Publications de Saint-André, 1999). The first essay is the publication of six lectures delivered at the University of Birmingham, UK, in 1966. His last essays, evocative trajectories of respectively thirty and ten historical and contemporary churches and abbeys, although published at the dawn of the twenty-first century, are still representative of the best of twentieth-century architecture of immanence. In the line of my intuition of chapels as the paradigmatic classics of our time, it comes as no surprise that his preferred case studies are small churches. His last essay, significantly dedicated in homage to Emil Steffann, presents *St-Paul* in Waterloo (Jean Cosse, 1969), the abbey chapel of Clerlande (Jean Cosse, 1981), the chapel of *Christ in the Desert* in Abiquiù, New Mexico (George Nakashima, 1970), the student chapel of Pordenone (1972), Zumthor's *Sogn Benedetg* in Sumvitg, Switzerland (1989), Fay Jones' *Thorncrown Chapel* (1980), the chapel of Chauveroche (Jean Cosse, 1991), the Cistercian church of *La-Paix-Dieu* at Cabanoule, France (Jean Cosse, 1998), the refitting of the seminary house chapel at Mechelen (Florence Cosse, 1997), and the refitting of the chapel of the Virgin at the basilica of Einsiedeln, Switzerland (H. Steiner, G. Malin, 1997).

27 Similar to Hammond and Turner, Debuyst reads the history of church architecture as the gradual shift from the personal symbolism of Christians as the temples of the Spirit (*domus ecclesiae*) "to a more objective and material one: the symbolism of the altar, of the cultic objects, and finally of the building itself" (*domus Dei*). In the twentieth century, it is thus important to recover this communitarian notion of *domus ecclesiae.* Debuyst, *Modern,* 25.

28 Ibid., 10.

29 Ibid., 12.

Hence, Debuyst nuances a bishop's definition of a church as "a kind of great living-room" without specific sacral character and no other function than to make people feel at home by emphasizing the *liturgical* function of celebration: the definition then becomes a "Paschal meeting room," or "the place where God's family meets to obey the Lord's command to follow Him, through His atonement, in the sober, strict, transparent, luminous, peaceful, active, deeply human reality of the new creation."[30] A contemporary church is thus neither a monumental *domus Dei* nor a simple gathering place, but is aimed at displaying a "Christian *genius loci.*"[31]

With this term, which he does not define, Debuyst indicates the intimate mystery of certain places (*genius loci*) deploying an undeniable Christian 'presence', at the threshold between nature and architecture, exteriority and interiority, the profane and the sacred, the human and the Christian, simplicity and polyphony.[32] What I call *Spiritus loci* builds on Debuyst's "Christian *genius loci.*" His intention, however, is not to develop a theology but to bring to our attention a specifically successful atmosphere belonging to certain churches, which Tillich called a "victory of spirit."

Debuyst draws both on the concept of *genius loci* as known in Roman antiquity and expressed by Virgil in his *Georgica*, and on the seminal essay of Christian Norberg-Schulz (1979). For instance, the Roman *genius loci*, decisive for the earliest Christian churches, is one of exterior places with a quality of interiority.[33] The *genius loci* invites the visitor to return to the concrete, material qualities of the place, in order to find orientation and identification. This means that the Christian *genius loci* has a particular sensibility for the environmental *genius loci*. At the threshold of nature and architecture, the Christian *genius loci* excels in bringing together on the one hand a profound *humanity* through scale, material nearness, hospitality, and simplicity (the "architecture of immanence" of a *domus ecclesiae*), and on the other hand a sense of Christian *mystery* of a polyphonic quality (the "architecture of transcendence" of a *domus Dei*).

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30 This definition has been given by the Dutch bishop Mgr. Bekkers in 1965. Ibid., 9. It is similar to Cardinal Joseph Bernardin's definition of 1984 in Chicago. See McNamara, 202. These definitions express the era of "an architecture of immanence" (Torgerson), in which the emphasis was put on the *domus ecclesiae.* Debuyst, *Modern*, 19.

31 Debuyst dismisses monumentality, and therefore Oscar Niemeyer's *Cathedral* at Brasilia and Kenzo Tange's *Cathedral* of Tokyo (and surely *St Mary's Cathedral* at San Francisco too) are fundamentally "wrong" from his *domus ecclesiae*-perspective. Debuyst, *Modern*, 49.

32 Debuyst, *Génie*, 79–80.

33 Ibid., 37.

Emblematic are the third century house-church at Dura-Europos, Emil Steffann's barnlike churches (Fig. 2.2), the Sirens' chapel at Otaniemi, flexible student chapels of the Liturgical Movement, and Benedictine abbeys. The Christian *genius loci* comes best to the fore in simple, polyphonic spaces centered on the liturgical assembly. A counterexample is Mario Botta's *Cathedral of the Resurrection* of Évry (1995) (Fig. 0.1) because it lacks both the "humble and direct dialogue with the living reality of the environment" and the "sober and delicate" awareness of liturgical complexity that are so characteristic of a Christian *genius loci*.[34]

In conclusion, I retain from Debuyst's thought the cosmological and celebrative dimensions of the contemporary *domus ecclesiae* intended to be *domus Dei* as well, albeit not monumentally overpowering but intimately evocative. I also follow Dom Debuyst in his methodological approach of proceeding through unique case studies displaying polyphonic truth.

Non-Church

In the line of Debuyst, an excellent illustrative case study of "an architecture of immanence" is the thought and work of the American Lutheran architect Edward Anders Sövik (1918–2014):

> Worship involves persons, not places. Persons are the temples. They are the holy things. It is in them that the kingdom is present. The encounter with God is any place. And the life in God – the truly religious life – is not a matter of special places, times, or esoteric rituals, but of spirit and truth.[35]

In 1973, he published his essay *Architecture for Worship*, in which he explains his concept of "non-church" or "centrum": "A house of worship is not a shelter for an altar; it is a shelter for people. It is not the table that makes a sacrament; it is the people and what they do."[36] At the basis of these ideas, which translate the *domus ecclesiae*, is Christ's own emphasis on persons and the absence of churches in the first Christian centuries, in contrast to monumental *domus Dei* as shrines emphasizing sacrifice and "a place that purports to be a fixed locus or container for the Divine Presence."

34 Ibid., 138.

35 Edward Anders Sövik, "Forum: Notes on Mark Torgerson's Quire," *Worship* (1997): 244–247, at 245. See also Mark Allen Torgerson, "An Architect's Response to Liturgical Reform: Edward A. Sövik and his 'Non-Church' Design," *Worship* (Jan 1997): 19–41.

36 Sövik, *Architecture,* 33.

Sövik's expression of "non-church" implies the return to authenticity, in contrast to revival styles which, as architectural cosmetics, "gave the illusion of ancient forms, but the result is more like stage scenery than authentic architecture."[37] If "humility that accepts and loves the earth [...] is the character of religious people then it ought to be the character of the places they build."[38] The central question is thus how a building "relates to people."[39] Usually, architectural aesthetics follow technical innovation. Reinforced concrete did not immediately yield new shapes, but the first churches of the twentieth century still represent an older theological understanding. For instance, Sövik underlines *incarnation* as the new theological paradigm.[40] From this doctrine follows that all places are potentially places of divine encounter. Hence, a separation between sacred and profane places is inadequate. Sövik concludes by invoking sacred emptiness: "The place which is ultimately faithful to the Christian vision will be one in which the room is devoid of any explicitly cultic images or furnishings."[41] Therefore, "if we are to suppose that people are more important than things and their activities are what make a place significant, then the void which provides for them is the starting point. And the problem of architectural design can be defined as that of giving character to the voids by the way we enclose, light, and otherwise define the voids."[42]

Out of the incarnation follows also an emphasis on the Christian as servant of the world. A multipurpose use in a "centrum" would avoid a static view of God's transcendence. Furniture, such as chairs and a raised platform for the table, must be of good quality and portable. According to Sövik, we become aware of divine mystery through the quality and beauty "about places and things that makes them appropriate to the encounter with the divine."[43] Architecture is not only technology, but also art, which is more than decorative, more than an exciting sensual experience, more than self-expression, and which Sövik connects with nonverbal disclosure of truth.[44]

37 Ibid., 25.

38 Ibid., 57.

39 Ibid., 58.

40 Ibid., 35–37.

41 Ibid., 37.

42 Ibid., 50.

43 Sövik, *Forum*, 246.

44 Sövik, *Architecture*, 44.

Case Studies: Three Precursors of the Fifties

> Protestants expect to be edified in worship,
> Catholics to be sanctified.
>
> JAMES F. WHITE[45]

In the rather uninspiring times after World War II, at least three smaller churches stand out for their lasting, paradigmatic influence. Whereas the purest, bare minimalism of "less is more" Ludwig Mies van der Rohe's *St Savior Chapel* at the Illinois Institute of Technology in Chicago (1952) is the repeatable archetype of rationalist Modernism, Le Corbusier's *Notre-Dame du Haut* at Ronchamp (1955) (Fig. 2.3) is a lyrical, Postmodern *hapax legomenon,* which should be admired rather than imitated.[46] Besides these two opposing paradigms representing the clarity of a *domus ecclesiae* and the mystery of a *domus Dei*, I suggest that Emil Steffann's *St Laurentius* in Munich (1955) (Fig. 2.2) belongs to a third type, which I propose to name 'communal', because it offers another liturgical configuration.[47]

Analytic. Mies's chapel is a rectangular box of stunning clarity, consisting of unadorned brick walls apart from the front glass wall, which is the only source of natural light. Light is thus purely functional, and has no intention of carrying divine symbolism. Transparency, clarity, honesty of materials, and minimalist symbolism are the chapel's proclaimed values. Two rows of pews line up towards a solid travertine altar-table on a low platform. A simple cross stands before a curtain, which hides the sacristy. As suggested by the British

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45 James F. White, "From Protestant to Catholic Plain Style," in *Seeing Beyond the Word: Visual Arts and the Calvinist Tradition*, ed. Paul Corby Finney (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1999), 462.

46 Debuyst, *Modern*, 48. A *hapax legomenon* (Gr. said once) is a unique word that occurs only once in a text.

47 Surveying the churches between the 1930s and the Second Vatican Council, the Belgian Benedictine scholar Frédéric Debuyst suggested the Sirens' chapel at Otaniemi as an in-between type between analytic and organic. I do believe, however, that *St Laurentius* represents a stronger third type (not merely in-between), because of its *communitarian* emphasis. In that sense, Otaniemi still belongs to the analytic type, although it represents organic openness. Heathcote also mentions Otaniemi as "deeply connected to Mies's minimalism." Edwin Heathcote, "The 20th-century Church: The Enigma of Sacred Objectivity," in *Contemporary Church Architecture*, eds. Edwin Heathcote and Laura Moffatt (Chichester: Wiley-Academy, 2007), 8–71, at 60. For this typology, I borrow Debuyst's notions, albeit in a slightly different sense: for him, synthetic and organic are synonyms, as he does not name the in-between form.

FIGURE 2.3 Pilgrim Chapel Notre-Dame-du-Haut, *Ronchamp, France* (*Le Corbusier, 1955*)

architectural critic Edwin Heathcote, Mies's choice of Modernism was not born in the passionate connection with the liturgy, as it was for his German precursors Rudolf Schwarz and Dominikus Böhm, but in order to find the universal form that could accommodate any function.[48] Hence, the connections between Schwarz and Mies that the American architect Thomas H. Beeby is so eager to find are not convincing.[49] Bearing Guardini's comments in mind, a quick look upon – read: visit to – Schwarz's *Fronleichnamskirche* at Aachen (1930) (Fig. 2.1) demonstrates, in the well-chosen minimalism of white sanctuary wall lit from aside and contrasting with the black altar-table, his desire to express transcendence, which was clearly not the case for Mies.

Organic. The contrast with Ronchamp could not be sharper (Fig. 2.3). Whereas the former is an empty box with no other intention than to be a dignified meeting room or *domus ecclesiae*, the latter does not eschew to play with texture, colors, shadows, surprising vistas, and sensual, sculptural form to

48 Ibid.

49 Thomas H. Beeby, "Rudolf Schwarz and Mies van der Rohe: The Form of the Spirit," in *Constructing the Ineffable: Contemporary Sacred Architecture,* ed. Karla Cavarra Britton (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2010), 82–95.

express a *domus Dei.* As a pilgrim chapel, it shapes the visitor into a pilgrim: already from afar, one needs to climb up the hill and contour the building – admiring its changing shapes – before entering. Unlike Mies's blunt clarity, this sculptural object needs to be conquered. Also inside, one is invited to go around and discover the different aspects of this archetypal cave-like structure where mystery lingers. Unlike Mies's delimitation of space by designing the limits, Le Corbusier sculpted space out of some kind of primal matter. Whereas the former stands for Modernist rationalism, the latter could be considered an iconic Postmodern dream. It comes as no surprise that Jencks mentions Ronchamp as one of only three religious buildings in his overview of postmodern architecture.[50] Both apply to some universal, primordial idea of space – the former, abstract, geometrical space; the latter, organic, earthly space. Ronchamp is also an iconic structure addressing the imaginative mind in its evocative symbolism, recalling a shell, a ship, praying hands, a mother and child, a bird, or a nun's hat.

Communal. Whereas *St Savior's chapel* addresses the individual mind and Ronchamp the individual body, *St Laurentius* emphasizes the worshiping community (Fig. 2.2). At the same time, it combines the disarming simplicity of the former with the organic quality of the latter, humbly making place for an assembly. It has a strong organic tactility and atmospheric 'presence' of space, which are possible to appreciate during a lonely visit, but this building is essentially space that waits for an encounter. The bare emptiness of its apse and the simplicity of its hanging lights are more than mere emptiness and functionality. Similar to Schwarz's vocabulary, they become strong architectural symbols in themselves, evoking by their sacred emptiness a transcendent presence. Its organic simplicity goes beyond being a mere *domus ecclesiae.* Its liturgical configuration emphasizes the participative nature beyond a basilical *domus Dei.* Similar to Ronchamp, it sets out a journey for the visitor-pilgrim, outside through the garden and inside by differentiating liturgical and devotional foci. Dom Debuyst particularly hails this church as emblematic for its timelessness, the differentiated point of access through a garden, and the orientation to the assembly and its liturgical actions.[51] Indeed, nearly sixty years later, the modest space still diffuses still life and a disarming atmosphere of hospitality.

In conclusion, as paradigmatic case studies of the twentieth century, I propose Ronchamp, the *St Savior's Chapel*, and *St Laurentius* as three archetypes representing the organic, analytic, and communal paradigms. This typology

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50 Charles Jencks, *The Story of Post-Modernism: Five Decades of the Ironic, Iconic, and Critical in Architecture* (London/New York: John Wiley & Sons, 2011), 48–49.

51 Frédéric Debuyst, *Le génie chrétien du lieu* (Paris: Cerf, 1997), 75.

corresponds to my proposed structure of synaesthetic, kerygmatic, and Eucharistic space. Other churches can be categorized according to this typology. For instance, Eero Saarinen's nondenominational *Kresge Chapel* (1955), a simple brick cylinder designed to induce "an atmosphere conducive to individual prayer," can be named organic in the fact that it explores texture, undulating walls, and represents mystery in its dark cave-like interior.[52] As symbolic space, its cylindrical shape and round arches might evoke antique architecture such as the roman Pantheon and the Pont du Gard.[53] The Sirens' university chapel at Otaniemi (1956) can be considered analytic in its minimalism, although it is organic in its openness towards the cosmos behind the sanctuary. Hence, it could be considered an in-between form.[54] Because of its innovative undulant curves, Oscar Niemeyer's well-acclaimed *São Francisco de Assis* at Pampulha (1947) might also be understood as organic. The Mexican Luis Barragán's convent chapel at Colonia Tlalpan in Mexico City (1952–55) "sparkles like a gem and illuminates the complex from its centre. There is little innovative about the chapel other than its beauty and simplicity."[55] It combines an analytical, rectangular concept of lines and order with an organic emphasis on space, color, texture, and light. As a final comment, this threefold typology does not discern between the desire to express the sacredness of space, as can be seen in the contrasting use of analytic architecture in the *St Savior's Chapel* and the *Fronleichnamskirche.*

Recent churches of the analytic type include Tadao Ando's chapels from the eighties, Peter Kulka's *Haus der Stille* at Meschede (2001), *Notre-Dame du Rosaire* in Les Lilas (2011) (Fig. 2.4), and *St Franziskus* in Regensburg-Burgweinting (Fig. 5.14).[56] Mies's vocabulary has also been implemented graciously in Schürmann's *Christkönig* at Wuppertal (1959) and Michael Scott's *Corpus Christi* at Knockanure, Ireland (1964), and more recently in the extraordinarily felicitous *St Thomas Aquin* at Berlin (see the Practical Guide at the end of this book: PG 6).[57] Hans van der Laan's churches may be considered to belong to the analytic type as well. Ronchamp's wall of colors has been imitated in Karel L. Sijmons's *Advent Church* at Aerdenhout, Netherlands (1958)

52 Judith Dupré, *Churches* (New York: HarperCollins, 2001), 128–129.

53 Ibid., 128.

54 Debuyst, *Modern*, 48.

55 Heathcote, 65.

56 Angelika Nollert, e.a. eds., *Kirchenbauten in der Gegenwart: Architektur zwischen Sakralität und sozialer Wirklichkeit* (Regensburg: Pustet Verlag, 2011), 96–99.

57 Wolfgang Jean Stock, *Architekturführer: Christliche Sakralbauten in Europa siet 1950/ Architectural Guide: Christian Sacred Buildings in Europe since 1950* (München, Berlin, London, and New York: Prestel Verlag, 2004), 102–103. Henceforth, AF. Richard Hurley, *Irish Church Architecture in the Era of Vatican II* (Dublin: Dominican Publications, 2001), 48–51.

FIGURE 2.4 Notre-Dame du Rosaire, *Les Lilas, Seine-Saint-Denis, France* (*Agence Enia, 2011*)

and *Notre-Dame du Rosaire* in Les Lilas (2011) (Fig. 2.4).[58] Carl Nyrén's Brutalist *Västerort Church* at Vällingby, Sweden (1956) displays strong light falling from above on the simple gray walls as an expression of transcendence.[59] Paul Schneider-Esleben's *St Rochus* at Düsseldorf (1955) is rather unique in its explicit symbolic reference to the Trinity in plan and elevation. Three parabolic, copper-clad shells stand upon twelve columns (symbolizing the apostles).[60] Its symbolic message is addressed to the mind. Although its vocabulary is unlike Mies's, its grammar is similar. Therefore, I suggest cataloguing it under the analytic type. Heinz Bienefeld's *St Bonifatius* at Wildbergerhütte (1981) might be considered to belong to the communal type.[61] A recent church of this type is Büttner, Neumann, and Braun's *St Canisius* in Berlin (2002) (Fig. 2.5), *Notre-Dame de la Sagesse* in Paris (1999) (Fig. 2.6), *Jesus Christus, der gute Hirte* in Frankfurt (2000) (Fig. 2.7), and *St Franziskus* in Steyr (2001) (Fig. 4.7).

58 AF 32–33.
59 AF 56–57.
60 AF 82–83.
61 AF 98–99.

FIGURE 2.5 St Peter Canisius, *Berlin, Germany* (*Heike Büttner, Claus Neumann, George Braun, 2002*). *Interior*

FIGURE 2.6 Notre-Dame de la Sagesse, *Paris XIIe, France* (*Faloci, 1999*). Eucharistic celebration on Saturday June 18, 2011

FIGURE 2.7 Jesus Christus, der gute Hirte (the Good Shepherd), *Frankfurt-Nieder-Erlenbach, Germany* (*Günter Pfeifer, 2000*)

The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly: Architecture of Transcendence

> People invariably see one building in terms of another, or in terms of a similar object; in short, as a metaphor. The more unfamiliar a Modern building is the more people will compare it metaphorically to what they know. This matching of one experience to another is a property of all thoughts, particularly that which is creative.
>
> CHARLES JENCKS[62]

In recent times, some Roman Catholic architects and historians have expressed concern for church architecture by proposing a return to historicist styles. Emblematic publications are Rose's *Ugly as Sin* (2001), Doorly's *No Place for God* (2007), and McNamara's *Catholic Church Architecture* (2009). In this section, I will consider their main theological arguments.

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62 Charles Jencks, *The New Paradigm in Architecture: The Language of Post-Modernism* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2002), 26.

Good: To Look Like a Church

> Anybody can build buildings.
> Few can build poetry.[63]

Does a church have to "look like a church" to be one? Can it not be a healthy development of dealing with the sacred, contrary to sclerotic ways of thinking and of expressing this in revival styles, which are, in fact, corruptions of the original idea of a church? I fully agree with the American architectural historian Denis McNamara that our contemporary churches should "provide a compelling testimony to the Catholic faith."[64] Indeed, a good building – a 'right building' in McNamara's words – is able to be *more than* just a building. It can be a symbol, it can be poetry. However, claiming that the only right style to build a church stopped with the gothic revival[65] is perhaps a theological misunderstanding, as he himself argues: "When we misunderstand theology, we build an architecture that proclaims that misunderstanding."[66] In order to discern if a contemporary church is a development or a corruption, we must first consider what is the 'type' or the original idea of a church. Indeed, participants in this debate differ in their understanding of the original idea of a church. The regrettable disconnection between *domus Dei* and *domus ecclesiae* is but one sign of this clash.

What is the original type of a church that has to be preserved in order to be a church? For McNamara, a church needs "the conventional architectural markers of churchliness," which are "a cross, tower, dome, conventional shapes, and proportions."[67] Why can a church not look like a spilled coffee cup? In fact,

63 A Chinese developer answered this to an American architect, showing his approval of the project. Lawrence W. Cheek, "U.S. Architects Given Freedom to Dream in China," *International Herald Tribune,* 01.17.2011.

64 Denis R. McNamara, *Catholic Church Architecture and the Spirit of the Liturgy* (Chicago/Mundelein, IL: Hillenbrand, 2009), 4.

65 Denis McNamara at least suggests this implicitly when affirming that "the Fathers of the Second Vatican Council rightly declared that the Church calls no one style her own, but that the genius of different ages was welcome, *provided that* these styles bring 'due honor and reverence to the rites' (SC 123). If they fail to bring due honor, they are not welcome in church building. The Church has many so-called styles of architecture from early Christian to Gothic Revival, and many have proven suitable for Christian use." Ibid., 3. One could think that all styles after the Gothic Revival are unable to bring due honor to the rites.

66 Ibid., 3, 169.

67 *Ibid.*, 27.

even McNamara acknowledges that the preservation of type does not include dull repetition of the same pattern, when he argues:

> Right building is not limited in the worldly sense to one style or another, to modern or traditional, liberal or conservative. In fact, it shatters the supremacy of these terms and finds the middle road. Right building, like all things relating to the transcendentals, has the potential for an infinite variety of beautiful manifestations, provided, of course, that it is indeed *manifesting ontological reality* in a given situation.[68]

Because "beauty is nothing less than the revelation of the ontological reality of a thing, the expression in material form of the innermost heart of the very identity of its being," a church must be "the very image of heaven itself made known in material form."[69] This might be so, but it will be important to understand the terminology of 'image': does it indicate *representation* or *expression*? I will develop this in Chapter 4. I agree entirely with McNamara when he emphasizes the transcendent *domus Dei*-dimension in saying that "a church building is first and foremost a *sacramental* thing, more than a 'simple gathering place'."[70]

I also agree with McNamara that "not all architecture is suitable for ecclesiastical use just because it supposedly comes from our time."[71] Indeed, novelty for the case of novelty is not the only criterion. But neither is it necessarily an obstacle. Similar to Doorly and Rose, he claims that new architectural styles must be dismissed for their roots in anti-religious skepticism. Nonetheless, in my view it would be absurd to claim that architecture can be Satanic or relativistic. It would even attribute too much to a non-representational art as architecture. Just as architecture on its own is considerably limited to represent God, in such a way it is limited to exclude God. Instead of inhibiting or enhancing God, architecture rather inhibits or enhances our relationship with God. To dismiss new fashions because of their anti-religious roots is in my opinion

68 Ibid., 3. Emphasis added.

69 Ibid., 2. Compare with: "Every church building is intended as an *image of the Heavenly Jerusalem*. This allows for great variety as long as ecclesiastical character is maintained." Ibid., 1. As a subscript to four drawings from Ernest Pickering's *Architectural Design* of 1947, one could assume that "ecclesiastical character" means that it "has to look like a church" (that is, Gothic), for the three 'contemporary' proposals are shallow imitations of the Gothic one. In my view, none of them succeed in picturing the image of the Heavenly Jerusalem. Verticality is not the only way to articulate transcendence in architecture!

70 Ibid., 3. Emphasis added. He refers to the *Catechism of the Catholic Church,* CCC 1180.

71 Ibid., 4.

erroneous, because it cuts you off from an entire creative domain of fertile ground. McNamara would even dismiss the third-century house church at Dura-Europos, because it "does not look like a church." It is significant that he does not mention this *domus ecclesiae*.

When McNamara retrieves the ideas behind architecture, which he understands as "the built form of ideas," he concludes that optical distortion is caused by original sin; showing Christ's underarm hair is the expression of "a denial of Christ's victory over death"; concrete, steel and glass are "disproportionate to the real importance of the building"; and buildings "that look like chaotic piles of crumbled up aluminum foil" express "that there either is no such a thing as Truth or that Truth is essentially unknowable" and that "there can be no improvement of society or the life of people through ordered buildings and cities."[72] In Chapter 4, I will propose a different architectural hermeneutics.

In my view, the Heavenly Jerusalem is a human reality that can only be depicted by the ecclesiological, ethical, ecological, and eschatological image of *communion*, not by an empty building. Hammond and Debuyst would agree. This lies at the basis of my understanding of a church as *Eucharistic space*, to which I dedicate Chapter 5, and of which the parish communities of *St François de Molitor* in Paris and *St Gregory of Nyssa Episcopal Church* in San Francisco are paradigmatic contemporary manifestations. Any church "is intended as as image of the Heavenly Jerusalem" in being the place that enables communion and encounter, of the creatures with their Creator, of the visible with the invisible church, and of the church with the world. An empty church is but a *locus*, waiting for an encounter in the Spirit. With right premises, McNamara often jumps to the wrong conclusions.

Bad: No Place for God

> To resacralize the liturgy and the church building, two things are required. The first is a leap of the imagination into universal space in order to insist that it be resacralized, that it be recognized as the sacred realm it never stopped being. Because in order to reclaim sacred space within the church building, cosmic sacred space must also be reclaimed. And in order to resacralize the liturgy, the cosmic liturgy must also be heard again. The second is to put aside the desire for self-promotion that the new theology embodies and both the new liturgy and the new church

72 *Ibid.*, 100, 153 n9, 27, 29. This can only be Frank Gehry, for this is his signature, and it works. What would it be great to have a church designed by him.

> building express. Combined together, these two requirements involve the simultaneous acts of thinking bigger and being smaller, thinking big enough to embrace the cosmos and being small enough to fit into it. At present the situation is the reverse: everyone is thinking small and acting big. And just look at the results.
>
> MOYRA DOORLY[73]

In *No Place for God*, the Irish architect Moyra Doorly provides a harsh critique of contemporary church architecture in a Modernist style as "theologically unsound" and "harmful to the Church."[74] Her main reproach is the denial of transcendence, as if contemporary churches were mere meeting rooms with "no place for God." Unfortunately, this critique makes no distinction between the undeniable blandness of most post-war churches and the exciting proposals of more recent developments, in which I recognize a return of transcendence.

The problem for Doorly is not so much the modernist style – which can be rendered 'beautiful' by an ornamental varnish (so abhorred as 'dishonest' by modernists such as Tillich and Schwarz)[75] – but its spatial principles of relativism, homogeneity, subjectivism, and restlessness.[76] According to Doorly, it is essential "to get the spaces right, and, in time, the aesthetics will follow."[77] I entirely agree with this principle, for the distinction between style and space is lucid. However, the problem is that, in her view, 'right spaces' seem

73 Moyra Doorly, *No Place for God: The Denial of the Transcendent in Modern Church Architecture* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2007), 118.

74 Ibid., 10.

75 "If [...] the Church had adopted the Modernist aesthetic and rejected Modernist ideas about space, then the solution to the current problem, the problem of ugly churches, would be simple. A restyling exercise would be required, that is all: a painting and decoration job, a make-over to render beautiful the bare concrete, the exposed steel beams, and the barren brickwork." Ibid., 3–4.

76 "Relativist space is homogenous, directionless, and value-free. In other words, it is the same everywhere you look, and no part of it has any more significance than any other part. In the Relativist universe, there are no signposts and no obvious paths forward, because no place has any more or less meaning than here. In Relativist space, boundaries and distinctions are dissolved, and since the concept of a special place set apart is an alien one, sacred space, by definition, cannot exist. Therefore in a universe from which the sacred has been eliminated, the only place for the individual to look is within. [...] Because Modernist architecture is the architecture of Relativist space, by adopting the Modernist style, the Church has incorporated Relativism into her very fabric." Ibid., 4.

77 Ibid., 122.

to include the hierarchical separation between the profane and the sacred in the line of Eliade, and not more creative and dynamic ways to imbue places with direction and differentiation of meaning in the line of Bouyer and Kieckhefer. Unfortunately, she does not analyze church architecture as liturgical or *lived space*. Her approach is therefore static, lacking liturgical dynamism as expressed, for instance, in *St Gregory of Nyssa Episcopal Church* (*infra*).

In order to bring back a sense of the sacred, she suggests reclaiming humility in church architecture and an awareness of belonging to a cosmic order. Both requirements together make us think bigger and act smaller instead of the reverse, which occurs at present.[78] Remembering Sövik, I cannot but agree with her on this point, and this is one claim I make for this book. However, her practical solution is a return to the *ad orientem*, and this point I would like to nuance further on.[79]

My answer to her essay will be twofold. On the one hand, I entirely agree with Doorly's critique of what she calls "relativist space." This critique is valuable, because the International Style has a tendency to create decontextualized buildings all over the world, although they perhaps abound mostly in shopping malls and not directly in churches. Nonetheless, I would like to follow her suggestion of giving "a leap of the imagination into universal space," albeit without ending "the disastrous and entirely novel practice of Mass facing the people."[80]

On the other hand, to demonstrate the existence of contemporary churches in a Modernist style with a sense of transcendence would undo her critique against this style and its spatial principles as theologically unsound and harmful. The search for such buildings is the main drive of this book, and it is the dimension of transcendence that I would like to bring to the fore in my case studies. For the time being, it is sufficient to mention Le Corbusier's *Notre-Dame-du-Haut* at Ronchamp (Fig. 2.3), and to do so with reference to Klaus Gamber's observation, comparing this pilgrim chapel with the utilitarian meeting places built immediately after World War II, neither designed as works of art nor as *domus Dei*:

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78 Ibid., 118.

79 "The reclamation of the transcendent vision cannot be achieved without a reorientation toward the transcendent, and this requires the ending of the disastrous and entirely novel practice of Mass facing the people and returning to the traditional liturgical direction in which priest and people together face the east. It means a re-turning of priest and people to God." Ibid., 126.

80 Ibid., 118, 126.

> In contrast, the pilgrimage church at Ronchamp has been used as a model for all those church buildings designed and built specifically as works of art. In building this church, the well-known architect Le Corbusier, a professed agnostic, has created a true architectural work of art. *Yet, in the end, it did not turn out to be a church.* At best it is a place to pray, to meditate. But the church at Ronchamp has become a model and meeting place for subjectivist architects. This development in the design of church buildings could only come about because of a growing conviction that there are no such things as "sacred spaces" that are (or should be) different from the profane world.[81]

Gamber admits that Ronchamp is a work of art and even a place to pray, even though it might not be a church in his view. It is not easy to see what he means by that. Because of its pilgrimage character, Ronchamp might indeed (apart from large gatherings of pilgrims) not be a church in the primary sense of a *domus ecclesiae* (*lived space*) of a parish church, cathedral, or abbey church, and invite a more personal relationship with the ineffable, through the emphasis on *perceived space*. Nonetheless, in my view, as a "place to pray" it is clearly a *domus Dei*, which the much critiqued utilitarian barns are not. In Ronchamp, there is an explicit desire to create an inviting atmosphere for an encounter with the transcendent, precisely apart from liturgical gatherings, because of its welcoming pilgrims and occasional visitors. With its organic and colorful play of light, Ronchamp clearly attests to the existence of such things as 'sacred spaces' in a contemporary style and the avoidance of Modernist spatial principles such as relativism, homogeneity, subjectivism, and restlessness.

Apart from reorienting churches, Doorly presents a threefold typology of contemporary churches of changing fashion but (in her view) similar relativist principles: the concrete brutalism of the 1950–1970s; the unchallenging community aesthetic that she calls "not really churches," such as the barn-like *Chapel of Reconciliation* at Walsingham, England (1981), the cathedral of Los Angeles (2002) (Figs. 4.10–4.12), and *Padre Pio Pilgrimage Church* (2004); and the dazzling "white box" of the *Jubilee Church* (2003) (Figs. 2.8–2.9).

81 Klaus Gamber, *The Reform of the Roman Liturgy: Its Problems and Background* (San Juan Capistrano, CA: Una Voce Press, 1993), 122.

Ugly as Sin

> One man's icon is another man's kitsch.
> WILLIAM SAUNDERS[82]

It must be said that the American architect Michael S. Rose's *Ugly as Sin* (2001) is a very ugly book, more in intention than in title and profusion of ugly (Modernist and historicist) imagery. On the one hand, "ugly" is perhaps not the right term for the most objective discussion in the matter. Taste is indeed personal. That is the reason why I opt not to use the concept of "beauty" as an argument in theological reflection. This, however, does not mean that I believe beauty has nothing to do with the matter. Gracious buildings, old and new, are indeed awesome. On the other hand, the author has a point when 'ugly' is understood as bland and uninspiring. Blandness might indeed be theologically sinful when better could be done.

Rose grounds his reflections in three "natural laws of church architecture" based on the archetypal *Notre-Dame* in Paris: verticality, permanence, and iconography.[83] His model is thus clearly Gothic. It is almost ludicrous how each case study stands or falls in comparison to this paradigm. For instance, *verticality* is taken literally and not in its theological sense of reaching out towards the heavens, which could be a metaphor for the desire to express transcendence (for which there are, obviously, plenty of ways apart from soaring heights – remember the use of color in Ronchamp).[84] *Permanence*, the next criterion, is even more ridiculous, although it could be understood as the attempt to express the eternal in material form. In contrast, Shigeru Ban's *Paper Church* (2005) and Mari Baauw and René Olivier's *St Peter and Paul Church* at Maassluis in plastic membranes (2007) are legitimate statements of temporariness (and thus the theological truth of the utter irrelevance of architecture) that in

82 William Saunders, "Strange, Hidden, Holy: Religious Experience in Recent Secular Architecture," in *Divinity Creativity Complexity*, ed. Michael Benedikt (Austin, TX: University of Texas, 2010), 34.

83 Michael S. Rose, *Ugly as Sin: Why They Changed Our Churches from Sacred Places to Meeting Spaces and How We Can Change Them Back Again* (Omaha, NE: Sophia Institute Press, 2001), 3.

84 In a footnote, in which he draws parallels between his natural laws and the Vitruvian triad, Rose himself allows for such a theological interpretation of verticality, which he connects to *utilitas* as "bringing the heavenly Jerusalem down to us." In my view, this metaphor can be agreed upon when it allows for manifold architectural expressions. Ibid., 16 n9.

contrast bring to light the permanence of the rites. *Iconography*, the last category, indicates inherent Christian meaning of what is perceived. Theologically speaking, imagery stands in-between the cataphatic and the apophatic. Hence, the white sanctuary wall of Schwarz's *Fronleichnamskirche* is iconographic in this sense (Fig. 2.1). In conclusion, Rose's so-called 'natural laws' for an architecture of transcendence can be applied to avoid blandness in church architecture, contemporary or traditional, but cannot lead to any stylistic preference that would not be subjective.

The main theological flaw of this essay is the lack of liturgical thought (*lived space*). Buildings are examined for their *perceived* and *conceived space* alone. The Eucharist is not an eschatological communitarian banquet but a sacrifice that one receives alone. The perspective is that of a lonely visitor used to kneel, rather poor in imagination and experience, and with a particular familiar image of church in mind, in which pews are indispensable patrimony and in which no lectern 'competes' with the altar-table. The main critique is canalized to 'bad people' who "changed our churches from sacred places to meeting spaces" such as liturgical consultants like Richard Vosko, who dared to inspire themselves by the Lutheran (!) Sövik…as if no Catholic in her right mind would do such a thing. The theology of adoration that Rose proposes is legitimate, but this does not necessarily imply pews and Renaissance architecture, for it can also be found in a Modernist church as Schwarz's *Fronleichnamskirche* (Fig. 2.1). Let me now discuss one of the churches intended as the 'classic' of our time, but that has received particularly harsh criticism.

Case Study: **The Jubilee Church*, Rome* (*2003*)**

> When I am asked what I believe in, I say that I believe in architecture. Architecture is the mother of the arts. I like to believe that architecture connects the present with the past and the tangible with the intangible. […] White is the most wonderful color because within it you can see all the colors of the rainbow. The whiteness of white is never just white; it is almost always transformed by light and that which is changing; the sky, the clouds, the sun and the moon.
>
> RICHARD MEIER[85]

85 Richard Meier, during his speech at receiving the Pritzker Price in 1984. http://www.richardmeier.com/www/ [accessed January 22, 2013].

In Doorly's view, Richard Meier's acclaimed and despised *Jubilee Church* (*Dio Padre Misericordioso*)[86] displays relativist space in a modernist aesthetic (Fig. 2.8). Apart from being built by a non-Christian architect, Doorly critiques the lack of "change of space" between nave and sanctuary, and the dazzling whiteness that articulates the only spiritual experience, if any.[87] This

FIGURE 2.8 Jubilee Church (Dio Padre Misericordioso), *Rome, Italy* (*Richard Meier, 2003*). Eucharist celebration on Saturday April 9, 2011

86 Phyllis Richardson, *New Sacred Architecture* (London: Laurence King, 2004), 30–33. Silvia Bigliardi, ed., *Le vele di Meier: Dives in Misericordia* (Milano: SRI spa, s.a.); Paul Post, "*A symbolic bridge between faiths: Holy ground* voor vloeibaar ritueel," *Jaarboek voor Liturgie-onderzoek* 23 (2007): 71–101; Jos Pouls, ""Lux Aeterna?" De Jubileumkerk in Rome van Richard Meier," *Streven* 77/3 (2010): 245–255; Richard Meier, "Jubilee Church (Dio Padre Misericordioso), Rome," in *Constructing the Ineffable: Contemporary Sacred Architecture,* ed. Karla Cavarra Britton (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2010), 148–157. For an extensive discussion of the different projects by Tadao Ando, Günter Behnisch, Santiago Calatrava, Peter Eisenman, Frank O. Gehry, and Richard Meier, see Steven J. Schloeder, *The Church of the Year 2000: A Dialogue on Catholic Architecture for the Third Millenium*, 3 vols., unpublished doctoral dissertation, Graduate Theological Union Berkeley, 2003.

87 Moyra Doorly, *No Place for God: The Denial of the Transcendent in Modern Church Architecture* (San Francisco, CA: Ignatius Press, 2007), 87. Breda Ennis has the same critique in "A Vacuum in the Spirit: The Design of the Jubilee Church in Rome," *Sacred*

observation merits more attention, because it points to the distinction between what Tillich described as mere emptiness and sacred emptiness. In other words, when does an empty white box start to speak (Valéry would rightly suggest 'sing') of the ineffable, or is this only a matter of taste and, in the worst case, of subjectivist projection? The whole endeavor of my research stands or falls with this question. It is my conviction, and the hypothesis I desired to examine in this book, that a sense of the sacred in church architecture is satisfactory only when three dimensions of space are given a satisfactory response: *perceived*, *conceived*, and *lived space*.

Considering the aesthetic impact of *perceived space*, Doorly points out the striking whiteness, and concedes that it could lead to some kind of spiritual experience. Although such experience cannot be imposed, we indeed cannot impede this to happen, if only for aesthetic reasons. Occasional visitors may be struck in awe by the splendid curves, imaginative shapes, and dazzling light that playfully celebrate human creativity and cosmic awareness. In fact, the shells open the imaginative mind to the cosmic order of light and airiness. The space inside is light and bright, airy and expansive, spacious and uplifting. Upon entering the space, one is immediately drawn into an atmosphere of openness. In response to Doorly, I claim that this characteristic of space is theologically relevant and thus must be given due attention. It contributes to the *domus Dei*-dimension of the church. It displays an anonymous and ethereal spirituality that has the advantage of being easily accessible to non-believers, not-so-sure-believers, and believers alike. Aesthetic awe is able to attract religious awe through association, according to Rudolf Otto.[88] This dimension of space that I call *synaesthetic space* addresses the imaginative body before it reaches the vision-informed mind. I do not claim that this dimension is sufficient to give a worshiping community a satisfactory sense of the sacred, but it

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Architecture 9 (2004), http://www.sacredarchitecture.org/articles/a_vacuum_in_the_spirit/ [accessed Jan 22, 2013]. She admiringly recognizes some references to Le Corbusier, but deplores the slow heating system and the elevated cost for cleaning windows under the frequent sirocco winds. She critiques the placement of the geometrical baptismal font as too close to the altar and in a place where you almost fall over it. In general, she reproaches the "analytical and 'cubist'" aesthetic to be incapable of a hierophany, that is, the dynamic breakthrough of the sacred into human experience. In comparison to Ronchamp, she argues that the *Jubilee Church* is rational instead of mystical. She concludes that this church is not a "bridge to religious experience," as Pope John Paul II invited art to be in his Letter to Artists, albeit a bridge to the austerity of architectural modernism.

88 Rudolf Otto, *The Idea of the Holy: An Inquiry into the Non-Rational Factor in the Idea of the Divine and its Relation to the Rational* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1931).

forms part of the whole experience of architecture and permits to see beyond the legitimate critique of relativist space. Space opens physically and imaginatively at the end of the road where this church sits. This church creates space for a community. Meier desired to create "a place of clarity and peace."[89] He succeeded in creating "an expression of aspiration, hope and belief, as well as openness and transparency."[90] Apart from specific guidelines for the materials of altar-table, ambo, and presider's chair, the deliberately broad liturgical brief asked for "a space of welcome" meant "to represent the timelessness of beauty" and "to ennoble those who enter it, both in terms of the structure and in the activities that take place within and around it."[91] In general, Meier's architecture hails purity, transparency, and openness. Instead of adding exterior signs to indicate that this is a Roman Catholic place of worship, Meier states that "light itself is the icon, the medium that allows the architecture to be silent, but ultimately revelatory."[92] Something similar can be seen in Steven Holl's secular and sacred work, when he uses in his *Chapel of St Ignatius* the technique of colors experimented earlier in the offices of D.E. Shaw & Co (Fig. 3.8). A mere secular architectural event can be deeply transcendent in itself: when situated within a religious context, that which remained anonymous gains a Name and a Face. The *perceived space* of the *Jubilee church* can be characterized as expansive openness.

According to the symbolic resonance of *conceived space,* the building's bold shape is a mischievous sneer at the bland residential blocks. Its whiteness – Meier's distinctive signature – also suggests a place of difference, a *heterotopia.*[93] The strongest feature of this unmistakably geometrical (and thus more mental than corporal) design is its original figure formed by three curving walls (Fig. 2.9). These intrepid shells deconstruct familiar images of what a church "should look like." On the one hand, they are like three sails of the navigating Church in the third millennium, recalling perhaps Utzon's Opera House at Sydney. This boat-symbolism can also be found in the shape of the altar-table, containing the relics of twelve saints. With fashionable language, the Church claims her place as an up to date dialogue partner in the current world. In another symbolic hermeneutic, they could also be seen as three pointers

89 Meier, 153.

90 Ibid.

91 Ibid., 153–154.

92 Ibid., 157.

93 Michel Foucault, "Des Espaces autres," *Architecture-Mouvement-Continuité* 5 (1984): 46–49; Pouls, 248.

FIGURE 2.9 Jubilee Church (Dio Padre Misericordioso), *Rome, Italy* (*Richard Meier, 2003*). *Exterior*

to the Trinity.[94] On the other hand, similar to Ronchamp, this symbolism is abstract enough not to reduce the church's evocative power to only this representational aspect. The shells are unfinished, suggestive lines of matter and void, playfully setting space aside, separating and ordering it. They are geometrical and yet playful in a non-symmetrical, apparently chaotic arrangement. The construction of these shells elevated the final cost and they cause unwanted acoustic echoes. Their only value seems to reside in the idea of the architect, perhaps the numeric reference to the Trinity and the symbolic association of the navigating Church – all part of the spatial representations of *conceived space*. This rational, pure, abstract, mental space corresponds to the modernist fallacy of transparency, so abhorred by Lefebvre.

This dimension of space that I call *kerygmatic space* introduces the divine Mystery and points also to the *domus Dei*-dimension. Through narrative and representation, *conceived space* nonetheless goes further than *perceived space* in articulating the Name and the Face of the worshipped God. For the *Jubilee church* to be a "place to pray" similar to Ronchamp, more is needed than the expansive transparency of its *perceived space.* Inside, the iconographic symbolism is rather meager, but nonetheless highly significant. A striking symbol is

94 This image has been given by Meier himself, according to Richardson, 30.

certainly the nineteenth-century crucifix in wood and papier-mâché that replaces, fortunately, the mere abstract cross in stainless steel proposed initially by the architect. For instance, the contrast between its dark wood and the white choreography of light behind it provides a fascinating theological statement (Fig. 2.8). Apart from being an iconic symbol, the crucifix offers a Christological narrative of passion and resurrection. I suggest interpreting the luminous vanishing point behind it as a suggestive representation of divine mercy, which is the dedication of this church (*Dives in misericordia,* rich in mercy), named by Pope John Paul II. I suggest that this divine vanishing point is able to transfigure the painful cross into a cross of glory. I will discuss the devotional centers of value in the next paragraph, because they also bring to light the church's *lived space.* The *conceived space* of the *Jubilee church* aims to give the Church a fashionable identity within the contemporary urban landscape. That seems to be its strongest – and perhaps only – message to the outside world.

In view of the spatial practice and centering foci of *lived space*, the *Jubilee Church* displays a familiar basilical plan of a nave with rows of pews axially oriented towards a slightly elevated sanctuary. The plan clearly reveals a traditional longitudinal conception, only blurred in elevation by the soaring vault that is somewhat reminiscent of Gothic arches.[95] Although fashionable in style and shape, unfortunately this church for the third millennium does not show renewal in spatial and liturgical configuration. The lack of liturgical dynamism is my main critique of this church. As *domus ecclesiae*, this edifice unfortunately does not articulate the achievements of the liturgical movement and the postconciliar experiments in providing a community with the space to embody the ecclesiological triad People of God, Body of Christ, and Temple of the Spirit. It is only then that a church displays what I call *Eucharistic space*, which also implies an eschatological and an ethical dimension, as articulated in *St Gregory of Nyssa Episcopal Church* (Fig. 5.5). It is precisely as *lived space* that a church exhibits its sense of the sacred as satisfactory for a community. As a matter of fact, a worshiping community needs more than a white box to pray. There must be meaningful centers of value and, as Doorly proposes, "change of space." The sanctuary in the *Jubilee Church* might indeed be critiqued because of its uninspiring blandness. With its ambo, presider's chair, and oval-shaped altar-table in the same travertine as the floor and the lower walls, the sanctuary comes across as mere functional emptiness. Apart from the aforementioned crucifix, the two strongest centers of meaning – as can be perceived in the devotional actions of the community – are the polychrome

95 Richardson, 30.

statue of the Virgin and the tabernacle, neither of which is situated in the sanctuary proper. The statue of the Virgin was placed only recently, and a relief of God the merciful Father was also added on the sanctuary wall behind the altar-table in order to enrich the iconography within this minimalist space.[96] The aseptic and clinical aesthetic needs these devotional centers in order to be appropriated by the local community. Minimalist space is perhaps sufficient to give a sense of an anonymous and faceless 'sacred', but this is not satisfactory for a Christian parish community. Obviously, it might be different for a monastic community, as John Pawson's abbey church at Novy Dvur demonstrates (Figs. 6.1 and 6.2). In that case, minimalism becomes a dense pointer towards God's Mystery, just as Schwarz and Guardini had hoped the *Fronleichnamskirche* to be. Much depends on the ethos of a community: that is the value of analyzing the *lived space* of a church, and not merely overinterpret beautiful pictures. Apart from being *domus ecclesiae*, the building needs also to be *domus Dei*, *lived space* to pray, apart from liturgical gatherings. On its own, the architecture is not sufficient to give a satisfactory sense of the sacred to a parish community. During liturgical celebrations, the *lived space* of the *Jubilee church* is classical in its – so abhorred by Schwarz – opposition of an active clergy and a rather passive assembly, and, apart from liturgical gatherings, depends entirely on the three meaningful centers of crucifix, statue, and tabernacle to be a true *domus Dei*, a place in which the Christian God can be encountered. Surely enough, the Arch of Noah-like altar-table does not have the same expressive power as the aforementioned three symbols. It is a functional table.[97] Finally, there is a lot of empty, free space, but the functional space is surprisingly small for a young parish of eight thousand people: the actual nave only holds seating for 240 worshipers. At my last visit, uninspiring plastic chairs had been added at the side.

Pouls reckons that this church is surely an architectural masterpiece enjoyed by architecture lovers and specialists, but that its iconoclast and formal aesthetic might be less appreciated by ordinary worshipers.[98] Pouls argues that this building could be erected anywhere, because it does not relate to its

96 A *Via Crucis* has yet to be installed. Around 2005, the parish priest wrote about the intended sober iconography that still had to be installed in the church: a *Via Crucis*, a statue of the Virgin, and the relief of the merciful Father. On my last visit on April 3, 2011, the statue and the relief had been installed, but not yet the promised *Via Crucis.* Gianfranco Corbino, "Una chiesa del terzo millennio," in Bigliardi, 84–87, at 87.

97 Ennis also deplores the fact that the altar and the crucifix are not on the same axis, and thus "a visual 'tension' is created which is in no way conducive to prayer or contemplation."

98 Pouls, 254.

surroundings.[99] In my view, this observation could be nuanced: the original shape and whiteness have the purpose of proclaiming the uniqueness of the Church as an imaginative place. Thus, it rightly stands for itself. Moreover, the 1970s apartment blocks fan out marvelously to welcome their new guest on an exquisite triangular site. This not only leaves the necessary space between the edifices to go around it admiringly, but also to approach it from a distance, so much like the familiar Baroque urbanism of Rome. Pouls deplores the fact that the church is not (yet?) the center of the living community, for relations with it are lacking. In conclusion, connecting it with the Rothko Chapel and Ronchamp, he asks whether this architectural masterpiece is not rather a retrospective echo of architectural modernism rather than a prospective guide for the future of sacred space. Something similar, in my view, can be seen at Oakland cathedral. I agree entirely with Pouls's observation that, in order to have a postmodern church, a worshiping community must be able to make the building their own. Building somehow only starts when the community sets foot in a place, and appropriates it. The (architectural and theological) success of a church occurs when the architectural and theological essence is not hindered but enhanced by the material appropriation of a community (like catechism drawings of the children, for instance). When one sets foot in a place, does this church speak (sing) of a local, living, worshiping community? This is one of the most theologically relevant questions relating to church architecture.

Let me again consider Doorly's criticism of relativist space. She defined it as homogeneous, directionless, value-free, and self-referential. When abstraction is made of the synaesthetic power and the kerygmatic iconography of the *Jubilee church*, her criticism would be legitimate. As *lived space*, the *Jubilee church* is most unsatisfactory. Its liturgical configuration does not display the same celebrative playfulness as its innovative shape. However, the wooden crucifix and its luminous vanishing point play an essential role within the church's minimalism: they provide the anonymous *Spiritus loci* with a Name and a Face. They give direction and value to an otherwise homogeneous space. Doorly suggested humility and awareness of cosmic space. On the one hand, the *Jubilee church* might not count as a modest *domus ecclesiae*, but as the

99 The Italian architect Cristiano Rosponi, in favor of historicism, gives the same critique, as if the *Jubilee Church* cannot be a proper sign of the Church: "The Church in the City of the Third Millennium," *Sacred Architecture* 5 (2006), http://www.sacredarchitecture.org/articles/the_church_in_the_city_of_the_third_millennium/ [accessed January 23, 2013].

self-referential masterpiece of a "starchitect."[100] However, it is not monumental in the way Botta's cathedral at Évry is. It combines instead frivolity and gratuity of space to give the Church architectural identity in the third millennium. On the other hand, the openness to the surroundings can be interpreted as cosmic awareness. The space inside is entirely dependent on the climatic flow outside. This is surely not what Doorly had in mind with cosmic orientation, but I contend that it is an essential dimension for contemporary church architecture to be postmodern.

Finally, let me go back to the question whether this church can be called 'sacred space'. Is it a mere "white box," providing functional emptiness for a liturgical gathering, or does it display or somehow allow a sense of transcendence? What is the sacred character of the *Jubilee church*? In my diagnosis, I brought to light three dimensions of the sacred. First, this church displays in its *plan* a traditional basilical opposition between clergy and assembly, which is not even used dynamically as processional space as suggested by the American scholar Richard Kieckhefer (*infra*). Therefore, this church is not properly what I would call *Eucharistic space.*

Second, can the emptiness be characterized as 'sacred'? In its *material aspect*, this church is a geometrical space addressing the mind rather than the body. Moreover, its acoustics are appalling and it is too cold in the winter and too hot in the summer. In an unprecedented way, the acoustics are criticized in the architectural guide edited by the parish.[101] The hard curves reverberate, and the chosen sound system, which was meant to remain modest and invisible in order to retain the 'purity' of the architectural volumes, is not able to undo their negative side effects. As 'pure visual architecture', this building might be a genial *tour de force*, but does not fit its primary function of *domus ecclesiae* where the Word is to be proclaimed, preached, and praised. Only its airy play of light and its cosmic dependence suggest the opposite. I agree with the American architectural critic Paul Goldberger that this church is a composition of solid, void, and light, but, contrary to him, I would precisely not include 'texture' in this enumeration, because it is not entirely sensuous and

100 Just as Post and Pouls, Ennis is surprised to find Meier's name and quotation so prominently featuring on the narthex wall, instead of a biblical or pontifical quotation.

101 Alberto Costantini, "L'acustica: Il fascino dell'imperfezione," in Bigliardi, 80–83. One of his noteworthy practical solutions would be to replace the glass behind the timber louvers by absorbing material. He ends his critical observations diplomatically, suggesting that Meier could have intentionally chosen "the fascination of imperfection" in order to evoke the atmosphere of an antique cathedral. Nevertheless, due to their synaesthetic, organic archi-texture, aged buildings do not sound as hollow as this 'pure' conceived space.

synaesthetic, but primarily visual.[102] Therefore, this church is not really what I would call *synaesthetic space*, but it displays some synaesthetic features, as a result of which the emptiness can indeed be called 'sacred'. For instance, although its language is not corporal but mental (lack of texture), a synaesthetic quality is the playfulness of form, inviting one to wander around and discover new perspectives, engaging the body and the imagination. Third, in its *elevation*, this church displays a modernist aesthetic of iconoclast minimalism. Instead of answering the question whether this has ever been suitable for a parish church, I would like to ask this for the twentieth-first century. The addition over the years of a statue of the Virgin and a relief of God the Father demonstrates, on the one hand, the fortunately ongoing appropriation of the church by a living community and, on the other hand, the current postmodern need for images and symbols in order for modernist iconoclasm to be meaningful. In other words, sacred emptiness and rich symbolism must work dialectically in postmodern church architecture. I do believe a right balance has been found between emptiness and symbolism. Therefore, this church is truly *kerygmatic space*, not merely in its iconographic symbols, but in their dialectic staging within sacred emptiness. The sacredness it displays is one of *conceived space*.

Let me develop this concept of postmodernism a bit further. Whereas for many, Ronchamp (Fig. 2.3) is the paradigm of the modernist church, could the *Jubilee church* be paradigmatic of the postmodernist church? I believe rather the opposite to be true. In Debuyst's classification, Ronchamp is *organic* space, as if hollowed out of some primitive matter, whereas Meier's church is the fruit of a purely mental effort of drawing lines in order to surround a space, and should therefore be classified with Mies's chapel under *analytic* space. The process to create space is entirely different. This can also be deduced from the texture: the plain walls of the *Jubilee church* do not engage the body as the archetypal grotto-like walls of Ronchamp do. In Lefebvre's classification, Ronchamp would figure under *perceived space* and the *Jubilee church* under *conceived space*. This does not mean that they would not have both dimensions, but that their emphasis lies on one or the other. Because modernist space values transparency and clarity of lines, and postmodernist space readdresses the body and the imagination, the *Jubilee church* is modernist. Effectively, McNamara classifies it under "Modernist Revival."[103] The only

102 "A Meier building is a sensuous experience before it is anything else. It is an exploration of solid and void and light and texture, and an essay on composition." Paul Goldberger, 2009. http://www.richardmeier.com/www/ [accessed January 22, 2013].

103 Denis R. McNamara, *How to Read Churches: A Crash Course in Ecclesiastical Architecture* (New York: Rizzoli, 2011), 55.

postmodern feature of the *Jubilee church* is its work on the imagination through its unique form. I defend playful celebration as a characteristic of postmodern architecture. The jewel-like *Jubilee church* effectively plays with the imagination. However, its playfulness in shape does not imply playfulness in space. Its liturgical space is uninspiring even for Doorly, who suggested a simple "restyling exercise" if the space would have been directional, differentiated, and meaningful enough.

Why are people, especially those in favor of historicism,[104] critical towards its minimalism? Why is the hierophany of sacred emptiness out of reach for them? Why is sacred emptiness appropriate in Cistercian architecture to express divine Mystery, as in the abbey church of Novy Dvur (Figs. 6.1 and 6.2), but not in the small parish church at Tor Tre Teste meant to be a beacon of the Church in the third millennium? When is the dialectic between sacred emptiness and rich symbolism in balance? That the *Jubilee church* is not a mere functionalist container but can rightly be called 'sacred space' is sufficiently demonstrated in the careful otherworldly staging of light and white of *perceived space* and in the Trinitarian sailing symbolism of *conceived space*, albeit certainly deficient in *lived space.* Post argued that our time is in need of being reinitiated in the most basic sense of the sacred as experienced in *perceived space.*[105] He draws on Mathew Evans, who distinguished between "the religious sacred" and "the spiritual sacred."[106] Post suggests that Meier provided the Church with "an open hermeneutic space, *Holy Ground* suitable for liquid processes of the appropriation of ritual and religion."[107] He recognizes the same open religiosity in mediation spaces, memorial sites, and ecumenical 'chapels' (for which the term does not seem totally appropriate) such as the *Rothko Chapel* and the *Kapelle der Weltreligionen* (1998).

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104 "We seem to have lost the ability to make new buildings which exude that ineffable sense of the 'Sacred' which can be rightly called the presence of the Almighty. [...] Recent church structures often seem of this world rather than otherworldly, down to earth rather than heavenly, more secular than sacred. In this increasingly secular age our houses of worship, by blending in with contemporary architecture, are in danger of becoming mere theaters and assembly halls rather than sacred and prophetic places." Duncan G. Stroik, "Restauration and Promotion of Sacred Architecture," in *Riconquistare lo spazio sacro/ Reconquering sacred architecture: Rediscovering Tradition in Twentieth Century Liturgical Architecture,* ed. Cristiano Rosponi and G. Rossi (Rome: 1999), 25. Post remarks rightly that sacred is understood as antithesis of the secular instead of basic sacrality. Post, 75.

105 Post, 93.

106 Mathew Evans, "The Sacred: Differentiating, Clarifying, and Extending Concepts," *Review of Religious Research* 45/1 (2003): 32–47.

107 Post, 94.

The *Jubilee Church*'s minimalist style of white walls can be compared with that of Schwarz's *Fronleichnamskirche* in Aachen (Fig. 2.1), Ando's chapels, Pawson's abbey church and proposed guest chapel in Novy Dvur (Figs. 6.1 and 6.2), *Notre-Dame du Rosaire* in Les Lilas (Fig. 2.4), *St Franziskus* in Regensburg (Fig. 5.14), and Fuksas' *San Paolo* in Foligno (Figs. 1.4 and 5.12). Although these buildings might be classified under the typology of the "white box," they are utterly diverse in their purpose of addressing the transcendent. In order to examine this, I will consequently analyze the tridimensional space that is the backbone of this book. From the point of view of *perceived space*, the unadorned walls display coldness and hardness. None of the aforementioned buildings use colored glass, but display plain white light. The *conceived space* is entirely different, going from three sails in Rome over otherworldly space in Novy Dvur and the purest abstraction of light in Osaka to a beehive in Foligno. Considering *lived space*, all of them are rectangular and display a traditional basilical plan of nave with rows of pews axially oriented towards a sanctuary. Although Duthilleul's *St François de Molitor* in Paris (Figs. 5.6 and 5.7) and Hartman's *Cathedral of Christ the Light* at Oakland (Fig. 4.1) in my view do not seem to fit the same typology (but certainly do so in Doorly's threefold typology), they display similar features that are easy to enumerate.

In this sense, the American architectural theorist Charles Jencks speaks of *critical modernism* as a postmodern (critical) overturning of modernist vocabulary, adding an external agenda, relevant iconography, and multivalence.[108] For instance, in his *Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe* in Berlin (2005), Peter Eisenman overturns "the most familiar form of Modernism," namely the rectangular box, by repeating 2711 concrete coffin-like slabs that vary in height. At the same time, this undulating field overturns the "portentous nonsense" of Modernist belief that minimalism is capable of making present the absent.[109] Meaning is only diffused in the bodily experience of "descending into frozen slabs of water" that force one to walk alone and cause disorientation, catching furtive glimpses of people suddenly appearing and disappearing "as if their life and death were fleeting, cut-off at both ends."[110] Critical Modernism goes beyond container-like Modernism that does not engage with the liturgical function. Hence, the *Capela di Santa Filomena* and Fuksas's *San Paolo* are still Modernist, whereas *Sankt Florian* in München-Riem (Fig. 4.13), *St François de*

108 Jencks, *Critical*, 218–229. He was the first to use the term postmodern in a positive sense in architecture in 1975.

109 Jencks, *Critical*, 223–226.

110 Ibid., 225.

Molitor, and Novy Dvur can be considered as Critical Modernist, overturning mere emptiness into sacred emptiness.

In the nuanced critique of this evaluation, I hope to have shown that this church is neither a mere container for sacred activities nor a sacred object to be adored. Apart from its rightly critiqued technical problems, this church is a valuable experiment and a sacred event that can give way to an encounter in the Spirit. Thus, it is a creation humanity can be proud of; according to Meier, not more or less than "a testament to the monumental work of men in the service of spiritual aspirations."[111] As such, it is a "place for God" and certainly not a "vacuum in the Spirit."[112]

In conclusion, there is something ugly in thinking in terms of 'the good, the bad, and the ugly'. Theological discussion cannot be founded upon such terms. Let me now proceed to the third moment of this *status quaestionis*, by formulating the hypothesis that contemporary church architecture of the two last decades expresses not only immanence, but transcendence as well.

21st-Century *Templum Spiritus*: Immanent Transcendence

> Architecture is blamed for deficiencies in liturgical use or in ethos.
> RICHARD KIECKHEFER[113]

The state of the question of the last two decades can be divided in literature and buildings. The former is shown in the bibliography, the latter in the Index of Church Buildings at the end of this book. In this section, I will have a closer look upon the literature. I will end with a particular case study, namely the church architecture of the Japanese architect Tadao Ando, which not directly enters in the geographical and chronological scope of this book, but which is highly representative of contemporary church architecture as *mystagogic space*, for it offers an itinerary from representation to expression, in which architecture is the protagonist.

Contemporary architecture is an extraordinary opportunity for the Church. A plethora of new forms, materials, and techniques is currently available in order to create space for the sacred. During the two last decades, smaller churches competing for originality pop up as mushrooms here and there in the Western suburban landscape: this is not only a challenge for liturgy, but even

111 This is the inscription on the narthex wall, boldly signed "Richard Meier, architect."

112 This is a reference to the essays of Doorly and Ennis.

113 Richard Kieckhefer, *Theology in Stone: From Byzantium to Berkeley* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 267.

more for systematic theology. Recent times have seen a growth in the number of publications and conferences on the theme of religious architecture.[114] According to the American philosopher Mark C. Taylor, this is a sign of a postmodern return of the religious as the reaction to a modernist secularism that excluded any transcendent reference.[115] In other words, after a period of what Mark Torgerson called "an architecture of immanence," the situation shows the sudden resurgence, all over the globe, of "an architecture of transcendence." This means that, from the traditional bipolar balance between *domus Dei* and *domus ecclesiae*, after a unilateral emphasis on the latter, there is now an inclusive retrieval of the former, as essential dimension of the architectural event.

The last two decades have seen an emergence of multi-authored and monographic publications on the issue of a theology of architecture. The multi-authored studies are mostly the fruit of conferences on the topic, which also demonstrate renewed interest in the field. My initial hypothesis is that, after a concentration of publications fifty years ago, reflecting the "architecture of immanence" (Torgerson) of the *domus ecclesiae* as the adequate expression of conciliar theology, the most recent debate centers around the question of transcendence. Today, there are basically two answers to the question of how to express the sacred in contemporary architecture: Hammond and Kieckhefer, among others, exposed this as the debate between historicism and modernism.[116]

Apart from occasional studies in other languages, there are currently three linguistic centers with an outspoken interest in the theology of place and architecture: English, German, and Italian. Remarkably, the cross-sections

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114 Apart from the symposia organized by the ecumenical community of Bose in Italy each year since 2003, the following sample shows a wide interest: "Divinity, Creativity, Complexity" at the University of Austin, Texas in November 2003; "Constructing the Ineffable," October 26–27, 2007 at the Yale School of Architecture, New Haven; "Liturgy and Sacred Space: Architecture for Divine Worship in the 21st Century," November 5–6, 2012 at the Tiltenberg, Amsterdam; "Liturgia, Arte e Arquitectura nos 50 anos do Concílio Vaticano II," November 15–16, 2012 at the Universidade Católica Portuguesa in Lisboa; and "Más allá del edificio sacro: arquitectura y evangelización," November 14–16, 2013 in Sevilla. In the summer of 2013, the *Deutsche Gesellschaft für Christliche Kunst* in Munich showed the exhibition "Neue Sakralität: Kirchenbau in Europa seit 2000. Teil 1: Bayern und Österreich," with Wolfgang Jean Stock as curator. See www.dgfck.de [accessed April 1, 2013].

115 Mark C. Taylor, "Revealing Concealment," in *Constructing the Ineffable: Contemporary Sacred Architecture,* ed. Karla Cavarra Britton (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2010), 66–71, at 67.

116 Kieckhefer, 267–292.

between these linguistic worlds are rare. Sustained discussions on Schwarz's theory, for instance, are rare in English; and German Protestant essays on spatiality draw on Löw's *Raumsoziologie*, which is not known outside the German-speaking world. The survey also shows how different linguistic groups have differing interests, although a common denominator could be the search for architecture of transcendence. From a denominational point of view, this question is treated by Roman Catholic, Protestant, and Episcopalian or Anglican authors.

The interest in a theological consideration of architecture may be divided according to the adjective that accompanies the noun 'architecture', and which reveals the focus of interest, from broad to defined: sacred, religious, ecclesial, and liturgical. Whereas essays on *sacred* space and architecture concentrate on the sacramental question of the possibility and limitations of calling human creations sacred, studies on *religious* and *ecclesial* architecture tend to be less theological and more phenomenological in the aim of presenting a new architectural style. Both categories tend to be interreligious and interdenominational. The last category adopts a practical theological question, concerning the *liturgical* use of worship spaces. Although there is a clearly ecumenical perspective, most publications in this category are written in a well-defined (and sometimes militant) Christian tradition.

In English, we can distinguish between the themes of place and architecture. Considering the sacredness of place, Sheldrake's *Spaces for the Sacred* (2001), Inge's *A Christian Theology of Place* (2003), Brown's *God and Enchantment of Place* (2004), and Wynn's *Faith and Place* (2009) are worth mentioning. They draw both on seminal works by Bachelard, Lefebvre, Smith, Tuan, Casey, and Soja, and on a biblical theology of place, of which Congar's *Le mystère du Temple* (1958) and Brueggemann's *The Land* (1978) are seminal, as well as the more recent works: Barker's *The Gate of Heaven* (1991) and *On Earth as it is in Heaven* (1995), and Beale's *The Temple and the Church's Mission* (2004).

The literature in English on the sacredness of architecture contains seminal monographic studies, which can be divided thematically, according to historical, hermeneutic, liturgical, or practical perspectives. From a *historical* perspective that does not eschew theological questions, we might mention Hurley's *Irish Church Architecture* (2001), Seasoltz's *A Sense of the Sacred* (2005), Vosko's *God's House is Our House* (2006), Doig's *Liturgy and Architecture* (2008), Kilde's *Sacred Power, Sacred Space* (2008), Yates's *Liturgical Space* (2008), and Remery's *Mystery and Matter* (2011). Among the more *hermeneutic* essays, Lukken and Searle's *Semiotics and Church Architecture* (1993), Jones's *The Hermeneutics of Sacred Architecture* (2000), Gorringe's *A Theology of the Built Environment* (2002), Kieckhefer's *Theology in Stone* (2004), Torgerson's *An*

Architecture of Immanence (2007), and McAlpine's *Sacred Space for the Missional Church* (2011) are worth mentioning. From a *liturgical* perspective, see Schloeder's *Architecture in Communion* (1998), Stroik's *Reconquering Sacred Space, 2000* (1999), Rose's *Ugly as Sin* (2001), Lang's *Turning Towards the Lord* (2004), Doorly's *No Place for God* (2007), and McNamara's *Catholic Church Architecture* (2009). The *practical* oriented works include Bowman and Hall's *When Not To Build* (1992), De Sanctis's *Renewing the City of God* (1993) and *Building from Belief* (2002), Mauck's *Places for Worship* (1995), Giles's *Re-pitching the Tent* (1996) and *Creating Uncommon Worship* (2004), Vosko's *Designing Future Worship Spaces* (1996), McNorgan's *Preparing the Environment for Worship* (1997), Adam's *Moving the Furniture* (1999), and Christopherson's *A Place of Encounter* (2004), to which should be added the guidelines of the Canadian Catholic Bishops *Our Place of Worship* (1999), and of the US Catholic Bishops *Built of Living Stones* (2000). Among the multi-authored volumes, see *The Sense of the Sacramental* (1995), *Searching for Sacred Space* (2002), *Architecture, Aesth/Ethics and Religion* (2005), *Constructing the Ineffable* (2008), *Theology in Built Environments* (2009), *The Religious Imagination* (2011), and *Loci sacri* (2012). Finally, there are the picture books, such as Heathcote and Spens's *Church Builders* (1997), Crosbie's two volumes of *Architecture for the Gods* (1999, 2002) and *Houses of God* (2006), Dupré's *Churches* (2001), Stock's *European Church Architecture* (2002), Richardson's *New Spiritual Architecture* (2004), Heathcote and Moffatt's *Contemporary Church Architecture* (2007), and Feireiss's *Closer to God* (2010).

German Protestants concentrate on the question of God and space, drawing mostly on Löw's *Raumsoziologie*, as in Umbach's *Heilige Räume – Pforten des Himmels* (2005), Wüthrich and Shali's *Wohnung Gottes oder Zweckgebäude?* (2007), Woydack's *Der räumliche Gott* (2009), Beuttler's *Gott und Raum* (2010), and Beyrich's *Theosphären* (2011), and the multi-authored volumes *Lebensraum Kirchenraum* (2008) and *Kirchen Macht Raum* (2010). German Catholics focus on liturgical issues and the retrieval of Schwarz's theory, such as Gerhards' *In der Mitte der Versammlung* (2001) and *Wo Gott und Welt sich Begegnen* (2011), and the multi-authored volumes *Communio-Räume* (2003), *Umbruch – Abbruch – Aufbruch?* (2008), *Kirchenbauten in der Gegenwart* (2011), *Zeit – Kunst – Liturgie: Der Gottesdienst als privilegierter Ort der Ästhetik* (2011), and *Kirchen: Nutzung und Umnutzung* (2012).

Italian publications concentrate on liturgical issues, such as Valenziano's *Architetti di chiese* (2005), Dianich's *La Chiesa e le sue chiese* (2008), Tagliaferri's *Saggi di architettura* (2011), Santi's *L'architettura delle chiese in Italia* (2012), and the multi-authored volumes *Architettura e Liturgia nel Novecento* (2008) and *Nuove Chiese per la liturgia rinnovata* (2010), and the multi-authored volumes

published by the community of Bose, *L'altare* (2005), *L'ambone* (2006), *Spazio liturgico e orientamento* (2007), *Il battistero* (2008), *Assemblea santa* (2008), *Chiesa e città* (2010), *Liturgia e arte* (2011), and *Ars liturgica* (2012).

In French, I must mention Debuyst's *Le génie chrétien du lieu* (1997) and the collective *Quel avenir pour quelles églises?* (2006).

In Spanish and Catalan, see Gil's *El templo del siglo XX* (1999), Aran's *Cap a una arquitectura de l'esperança* (2012), and the multi-authored volume *Arquitecturas de lo sagrado* (2009).

In Dutch, Delrue's *Kunst en liturgie* (2009), De Wolf's *Nieuwe lente voor religieuze kunst* (2011), and the multi-authored volumes *Een ander huis: kerkarchitectuur na 2000* (1997) and *Ruimten voor heiliging* (2011) are worth mentioning.

At the end of this survey, I will have a closer look at three recent studies, which present the hermeneutic framework on which my endeavor is built: Brown's *God and Enchantment of Place* (2004), Kieckhefer's *Theology in Stone* (2004), and the multi-authored volume *Constructing the Ineffable* (2008).

Sacramental Enchantment

> Church architecture is often seen merely as one particular means of facilitating some general strategy such as communication of the faith, and of course if that is all it is doing, the response might well be to relegate it to an issue of minor importance because other means are so often more effective.
>
> DAVID BROWN[117]

As an answer to the 'disenchantment' (*Entzauberung*) of the world, the British Anglican theologian David Brown suggests to recover "a reinvigorated sense of the sacramental" as "a major, and perhaps even the primary, way of exploring God's relationship to our world."[118] For the case of architecture, "the fact that

117 David Brown, *God and Enchantment of Place: Reclaiming Human Experience* (New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 22.

118 Ibid., 5–6. He deals especially with architecture in "Chapter 5. Competing Styles: Architectural Aims and Wider Setting," 245–307 and "Chapter 6. The Contemporary Context: House and Church as Mediators," 308–349. This is the first part of Brown's trilogy on the interaction between theology and the arts, together with *God and Grace of Body: Sacrament in Ordinary* (2007) and *God and Mystery in Words: Experience through Metaphor and Drama* (2008). His vast enterprise includes music, gardens, sport, theatre, dance,

the means are provided by human beings does nothing to undermine the possibility (and to me the fact) that God is thereby enabled to act through such buildings and thus make his presence felt."[119] The principal medium for this exploration is "sacramentality," which he defines as "the symbolic mediation of the divine in and through the material," emphasizing that "the material symbol says something about God in its own right" and is not merely instrumental.[120]

Sacramentality is the place of encounter between *immanence* (God in the world) and *transcendence* (God beyond the world): "Transcendence speaks of that otherness which is a non-physical, immaterial reality; immanence of its involvement in the material."[121] An adequate theology must incorporate both dimensions, and "the most successful forms of religiously adequate architecture are those that try to balance precisely those two aspects in the overall expression that the building seeks to achieve."[122] The dialectic between immanence and transcendence finds its source "in a God who is willing to focus his presence in a tiny wafer yet is at the same time someone who the heavens cannot contain."[123]

Brown attributes an essential role to architecture, which is to "imitate" God's creation, "so through that imitation it can open up the possibility of God himself using such means to communicate with humankind."[124] Its role "is not to restrain but to liberate, to open up possibilities," which can also imply "to discourage certain images of God as e.g. that he is malign, easily conceived, or subject to manipulation."[125] Brown also critiques the current presumption of a divine absence that has to be 'corrected' by the addition of 'sacred spaces'. The job of the religious building is not to 'initiate' but to *evoke* "a focused and not an exclusive presence […] in a way that allows worshippers an experience that can then inform the rest of life."[126]

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literature, architecture, and film. The precursors of this trilogy can be found in *Tradition and Imagination: Revelation and Change* (1999) and *Discipleship and Imagination: Christian Tradition and Truth* (2000), in which he explains his methodology, esp. 289–406. Allurement is a unifying concept in religious architecture, according to Lindsay Jones, *The Hermeneutics of Sacred Architecture: Experience, Interpretation, Comparison* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000), vol. II, 3.

119 Brown, *Enchantment*, 305.

120 Ibid., 30.

121 Ibid., 81.

122 Ibid., 84.

123 Ibid., 409.

124 Ibid., 245.

125 Ibid., 255, 256 n35.

126 Ibid., 255.

Brown does not discuss the relationship between architecture and liturgy. His point of view is that of the lone spectator who experiences awe at the sight of a building. Brown points out the current need, in our utilitarian times, "to sit quietly in the building instead of attending a church service."[127] In my terms, he is interested in *synaesthetic space* as the main dimension of *mystagogic space*. Brown neither excludes the liturgical (*Eucharistic space*) nor the symbolic (*kerygmatic space*) dimensions of church architecture, but ensures that the "overall message" is coherent: buildings should be appreciated as *Gesamtkunstwerk*.[128] That is why he would be inclined to nuance Susan White's strong case that people, and not the sites themselves, make places sacred.[129] People obviously matter more than buildings, but sacred space can value people "through bringing them closer to God."[130] He would thus agree with the need for a *phenomenological* study of church architecture (*synaesthetic space*) before *semiotics* (*kerygmatic space*)[131] and before *liturgical considerations* (*Eucharistic space*).[132]

Because he is a theologian and not an architectural theorist, he does not explore *how* architecture conveys the sacred, but dwells on the fact *that* it does so, and in different ways. He attributes these differences to the diversity of architectural styles: "Differences in architectural style will inevitably make some difference to the way in which we experience the divine and to the implications that we draw from such experience."[133] He is methodologically sympathetic to any style, even Modernism, although he attributes its malfunction to "Christianity's almost complete failure seriously to engage with such issues raised by such architecture and its underlying principles."[134] The problem of

127 Ibid., 245.

128 Ibid., 245–246, 272.

129 Ibid., 154, n2.

130 Ibid., 260.

131 Ibid., 22. He reproaches Peter Hammond to stress excessively liturgical instrumentality in detriment of enchantment.

132 "Inevitably, worship gets distorted when we ask for its point, for it is not there to build up the community (though it may incidentally achieve that function), nor is it there because God needs our praise. It is there simply as an expression of who we are and how we stand in relation to God. So, similarly, with [architecture]. To ask what practical purpose a particular building style serves [reduces its potential]." Ibid., 408.

133 Ibid., 255.

134 Ibid., 309. "Each of the building styles that has characterized the history of Christianity has the capacity in its own right to convey something of the enchantment that consists in basking in the presence of God without any further end in view." Ibid., 245. What would the neoclassicists think of Hersey's suggestion that classical architecture refers to bloody sacrifice: the capital alludes the victim's head, the triglyphs the thigh bones, and the

Modernism is not *simplicity* as such, which can provide a sense of transcendence (think of Cistercian minimalism), but "the assumption that this is all that needed to be said. Human beings are also made for delight and joy, and therein lies part of the motivation for ornament throughout most of the history of architecture, and perhaps also thus indirectly for the rise of Postmodernism."[135]

In his survey of architectural styles from the Jerusalem Temple to postmodernism, Brown highlights their difference in addressing immanence and transcendence. For instance, although little survives of direct theological reflection of Romanesque architecture, Brown understands the essence of this style as being drawn "*into* sacred space rather than upwards."[136] Weight and solidity indicate an earthed presence, for which Brown classifies the Romanesque under the more "immanent" styles. In contrast, Cistercian minimalism challenged the excesses of Romanesque realism. According to Brown, such an extreme expression of *transcendence* did not last because it demanded too much of human beings: there were not enough *immanent* stimuli.[137]

A church is only successful when it combines *immanence* and *transcendence.* This has been done, in his diagnosis, in Gothic buildings, where the *immanence* of Gothic art complemented the architectural *transcendence* of the soaring spires and arches. Nevertheless, "one wonders whether in churches crowded with color and with artefacts the architecture would really have been able to fulfill adequately its transcendent role, once it also sought to offer immanent messages as well."[138] Thus, architecture is *sacramental* "when the worshipper is also taken through the material into an experience of transcendence."[139] The same sacramental dialectic between immanence and transcendence should be found in any style: a church in a Gothic Revival style that lacks the *immanence* of sacred art is merely "high and dry," "a mere symbolic reminder of the divine rather than indicative of interaction between God and his world."[140]

tympanum the sacrifical tables? See George L. Hersey, *The Lost Meaning of Classical Architecture* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1988), 23–38.

135 Ibid., 347.

136 Ibid., 267.

137 Ibid., 271.

138 Ibid., 281. "For Gothic to succeed it needs appropriate countertriggers, to suggest divine immanence as well as transcendence. These need to be as strong as its own pull heavenwards." Ibid., 305.

139 Ibid., 348.

140 Ibid., 304.

The unilateral emphasis on *immanence* would deprive God from his essential otherness and his capacity "to challenge and subvert what we would like him to be saying."[141] Hence, *transcendence* frees the community from a burden:

> An exclusive focus on the presence of God within the human community inevitably places a difficult, if not impossible, burden upon that group. However good and supportive they are to one another, Christians are fed ultimately by something more invisible, namely Christ himself, and so there is need of foci that can carry the eye and other senses beyond the immediate human presence when required, to reinforce that conviction, especially when the going gets tough. That is one key reason why the art employed needs to be integral and not accidental.[142]

Brown deplores the fact that contemporary church architecture, "in so far as it speaks of faith at all, is likely to reflect a more immanent God than what much of Christianity has hitherto preached."[143] His diagnosis is thus similar to that of Rose, Doorly, and McNamara, but his solution is not limited to one style: "Buildings can and do communicate a mediated divine presence, but it would be a disaster were the Church to commit itself to the view that this comes in only one particular guise."[144]

In conclusion, every architectural style has to find the right balance between *immanence* and *transcendence*, which are basic ideas that can be expressed in multiple ways: "This is why suspicion of spires needs to be balanced, it seems to me, by a search for alternative forms of expression of just such an idea."[145] Thus, I would suggest that Fuksas's Modernist minimalism in *San Paolo* in Foligno (Figs. 1.4 and 5.12) is an attempt to create an otherworldly quality that from itself evokes *transcendence*. The problem here is to find adequate *immanence* in the gilt Baroque furniture and the abstract contemporary *via crucis.* The later addition of a spire-like cross looks artistically – and thus theologically – awkward next to the strong presence of the gray box.

141 Ibid., 339.

142 Ibid., 346.

143 "Although there is much that is fresh and exciting, there seems to me little clarity of vision. That, I suspect, is due in no small part to the way in which architecture has been allowed to retreat from being a matter of religious and theological concern. Churches and congregations then get the buildings they deserve: the product of as little reflection as they themselves have given to the matter." Ibid., 333.

144 Ibid., 347.

145 Ibid., 339.

Apart from minor illustrative references to – in his view – successful mediations of transcendence and immanence, such as Le Corbusier's Ronchamp (Fig. 2.3), Ando's *Church of the Light*, and the churches of Makovecz and Botta (Fig. 0.1), Brown does not explore concretely *how* buildings do so.[146] He basically points out the fact *that* architecture mediates the divine, and the problem of overlooking it in theological reflection. This observation will be the basis for my phenomenological approach of *synaesthetic space*.

Kinetic Dynamism

> When construction of the building is completed,
> construction of the church can begin.
>
> RICHARD KIECKHEFER[147]

Treating church architecture involves exploring a range of theological fields, such as Christian anthropology, ecclesiology, and sacramental theology. The main theological issues in Kieckhefer's *Theology in Stone* are the question of sacrality as presence and association rather than separation, the relationship between architecture and worship, and the communal nature of church architecture.

Out of a historical interest for ritual and the urge for understanding what churches have meant and can mean for communities that use them, the American historian Richard Kieckhefer (1946), who situates himself in liberal Anglo-Catholicism, intertwines historical research and theological questions in *Theology in Stone: Church Architecture from Byzantium to Berkeley.*[148] Rooted in basic human experiences of churches, one of the main purposes of this book is to bring experience to the level of conception through the use of conceptual tools, and thus to stimulate thinking about churches and their worship.[149] Kieckhefer warns against misreading a church when it is decontextualized from its liturgical purpose: for instance, it is too simplistic to say that God

146 Ronchamp gives at once a sense of immanence and transcendence, "despite its rootedness it also succeeds in giving the impression of attempting to soar aloft." Ibid., 336. In Brown's judgment, Botta succeeds to "communicate human aspiration towards something higher and better than themselves." Ibid., 340. Brown argues that the sense of transcendence in Ando's *Church of the Light* "is obvious." Ibid., 342.

147 Kieckhefer, 133.

148 Ibid., vii–viii.

149 Ibid., 4.

is remotely transcendent when the altar-table sits at one end of a longitudinal space, because the clergy might be sitting with the faithful in the nave during the liturgy of the word, and the whole congregation might gather around the altar-table for the liturgy of the Eucharist.[150] He also warns against 'ventriloquizing', that is, generalizing one's own interpretations, as if they were inherent messages emanating from the churches themselves.[151] Our responses to churches are conditioned by our cultural tradition, our expectations, the (lack of) liturgical use, the size of the congregation, the ethos of the community, and our own sensitivity, which can be developed.[152] Amidst all these variables, it is a challenge to formulate basic tools for discussion, agreement, and clearer understanding of disagreements.

In order to be able to 'read' a church, Kieckhefer suggests four ways of looking at a church building, focusing on its spatial dynamics, centering focus, aesthetic impact, and symbolic resonance. As a historian interested in ritual, his main concern is how a church is appropriated, used and refashioned by later generations: "When construction of the building is completed, construction of the church can begin."[153] Whereas the first two complementary factors focus on the *use* of the space, the last two consider the *reaction* it is meant to foster. *Spatial dynamics* concern the general configuration of the space, relating to the flow of worship. *Centering focus* considers the main focus or foci around which the liturgy develops. For the third and fourth factors, Kieckhefer distinguishes between the immediate impact on the experience of the holy (*aesthetic impact*) and sustained exposure of the sacred (*symbolic resonance*). In response to a classic understanding of the sacred as *separation* (Eliade), Kieckhefer pleads for an understanding of sacredness as *association* and *presence*, that is, by the richness of symbolic associations and by making present the divine.[154] This consideration of the sacred is a first theological statement that I will have to examine more closely.

The great value of these four factors is their ability to concentrate on the specificity of church architecture as a *dynamic* art in which one has to enter as a present community with a history and a future. Although at first sight they may

150 Kieckhefer critiques the assumptions of James F. White in "Liturgical Space Forms Faith," *Reformed Liturgy and Music* 22 (1988): 59–60. He also reproaches Lindsay Jones and Margaret Visser to do the same. Kieckhefer, 6, 16.

151 He directly critiques Edward A. Sövik to generalize his own interpretations in "A Portfolio of Reflections on the Design of Northfield Methodist Church," *Your Church* 13/5 (Sept–Oct 1967): 57. Ibid., 8–9.

152 Ibid., 4–10.

153 Ibid., 133.

154 Ibid., 18.

appear to be born out of hegemonic vision, they cannot be appreciated without being bodily present. Kieckhefer does not understand the building as an object but as an event in which one can participate. He does not focus on apparently static and passive elements as space, light, altar-table, and pulpit, but on their dynamics, their orienting activity, their immediate effect, and their sustainable resonating power: in other words, the *relationship* between the architectural surroundings and ourselves. In my view, the verbs are essential to Kieckhefer's framework: space is dynamic, a focus orients, the aesthetics have an impact, and symbols resonate. His distinction between use and impact is also clarifying: whereas the first two factors are fulfilled only in communitarian use of the space, the latter two can be appreciated during individual visits, although he underlines the importance of the community in the effect of the space.

Kieckhefer applies these four hermeneutic factors to a typology of three church traditions, which he calls *classic sacramental*, *classic evangelical*, and *modern communal*.[155] The first, basilical type has the longest historical tradition and is mainly found in Roman Catholic, Orthodox, and Anglican traditions. It consists in a longitudinal nave with a clear focal point on the altar-table in the sanctuary and is often soaring in aesthetic impact and rich in symbolic resonance. The second, auditorium type finds its origins in the sixteenth century of the Reformation and consists in a plain functional space around a pulpit. The third type, the most recent of all, finds its paradigm in the typical hospitable *domus ecclesiae* of the twentieth century. Because the latter two, usually smaller, are easier to understand as 'prose' compared to poetry, and thus "can more easily look after themselves," Kieckhefer's book reads as an apologetic revalorization of the classic sacramental church, especially in its potential of liturgical and processional dynamism, of which "many people have limited experience and therefore limited understanding."[156] This apology for kinetic dynamism, together with the practicality of the four hermeneutic factors, is the most original aspect of Kieckhefer's essay, for which it stands out in the recent literature on the theology of sacred space. Kieckhefer does not eschew theological questions, though he does not treat them systematically. Rather, he provides a historical examination, which is also quite sparing concerning the most recent realizations.

Whereas the four first chapters present Kieckhefer's hermeneutic framework, the last four chapters are dedicated to major historical case studies,

155 These correspond roughly to Reinhard Gieselmann's typology of longitudinal, transversal, and centralized churches. See Reinhard Gieselmann, *Contemporary Church Architecture* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1972).

156 Kieckhefer, 17–18, 25.

loosely applying his tripartite typology and fourfold framework: the classic sacramental Roman Catholic *Minster* in Beverley, Yorkshire, during the Middle Ages; Roman Catholic, Lutheran, Episcopal, and Orthodox revival churches and their respective emphasis on intercession, proclamation, and mediation in Chicago during the years 1871–1929; a (rare in English texts) extensive chapter on the theory, work, and reordering of German architect Rudolf Schwarz; and an open conclusion on one particular contemporary issue in church architecture, namely the statute of the modern communal church after the Second Vatican Council, in which Kieckhefer is remarkably lucid on the current debate between historicism and modernism concerning the sacred.

This final section on two dogmatically opposing views of sacrality, understood as separation or as presence and association, suggests the middle way of "an orthodox conception of church architecture," maintaining the paradox between the dogmatic pitfalls of both historicists, who adhere to the classic sacramental church, and modernists, who only vow with the modern communal church, "to which the classic evangelical church is tacitly but misleadingly assimilated."[157] The main problems Kieckhefer identifies in this debate are the caricaturizing of the opponent's view, the limited experience of church architecture (many communal churches are indeed banal, and sacramental churches sedentary and bland), and the fact that "architecture is blamed for deficiencies in liturgical use or in ethos."[158] Indeed, people "often have limited notions of how their own buildings can be conceived and used" and "none of the configurations of seating quite solves the problem of how the congregation relates to the presider. [...] Any arrangement of sacred space can give rise to clericalism. Any form of church design can lead to a sense that it is the clergy who act and the laity who merely react."[159] Another of Kieckhefer's lucid aphorisms states: "What we today call progressive innovation will soon become traditional."[160] Written by a theologically informed historian for whom "history is what keeps options open and possibilities alive for architecture and for theology," *Theology in Stone* as a whole reads as homage to the creativity of Schwarz and Bouyer.[161]

"I Am the Way": Kinetic Dynamism. A longitudinal church with the altar on a high platform at one end, such as Schwarz's *Fronleichnamskirche* in Aachen (1930) (Fig. 2.1) might be interpreted as expressing a theological understanding

157 Ibid., 288.
158 Ibid., 267.
159 Ibid., 290, 280–281.
160 Ibid., 291.
161 Ibid., 292.

of the sacred as separation, emphasizing the inapproachability of divine transcendence and institutional hierarchy.[162] The longitudinal basilica, without pews and communion rails to confine the congregation, was in the beginning meant for the movement of the assembly. It is significant that we still visit the great Gothic Cathedrals in a kinetic dynamism, but do not worship in them in a similar kinetic way. The segmentation of longitudinal space and the increasing sedentary worship obscured its original dynamic purpose. In a sense, an elliptic *Communio-Raum* (to which I include Duthilleul's *St Ignace* and *St François de Molitor* in Paris (Figs. 5.6 and 5.7)) is another type of sedentary worship, although the visual dynamism is heightened by the differentiation of liturgical centers.[163] For instance, Schwarz's longitudinal *St Albertus Magnus* in Andernach (Rudolf Schwarz 1954) has recently been transformed in *Communio-Raum* (Maria Schwarz, Johannes Krämer, Albert Gerhards, 2002) (Fig. 2.10).

The most common kinetic dynamism in longitudinal churches today consists in entrance, offertory, and communion processions,[164] but I am most interested in the kinetic dynamism of the congregation as a whole. Kieckhefer points out four advantages of communal kinetic dynamism: a shifting relationship between clergy and assembly, a clear definition of liturgical transitions, an enrichment of different senses of sacrality, and a permanent invitation to move eventually.[165] The historical tendency however has been to transform transitional markers into barriers.

The path or way is an archetypal expression of the spiritual process towards the sacred.[166] The processional way towards the sacred can be enhanced by the emphasis on the central axis, through architectural features as the placement of the liturgical furniture on a central axis, as in *St François de Molitor* in Paris (Figs. 5.6 and5.7); distinctive turns and vistas, as in the *Chapel of St Ignatius* in Seattle (Figs. 3.6 and 3.8); repetitive rhythm of columns or louvers, as in *Herz Jesu* in München (Fig. 1.3); distinct pavement, as in Maguire and Murray's

162 This has been the explicit desire of architect Kenzo Tange for his *St Mary's Cathedral* in Tokyo (1967–69), as reported in Reinhard Gieselmann, *Contemporary Church Architecture* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1972), 70, quoted in Kieckhefer, 25.

163 See *Communio-Räume: Auf der Suche nach der angemessenen Raumgestalt katholischer Liturgie,* ed. Albert Gerhards, Thomas Sternberg, and Walter Zahner, Bild-Raum-Feier: Studien zu Kirche und Kunst 2 (Regensburg: Schnell & Steiner, 2003).

164 Kieckhefer offers a useful historical discussion of these processions. Ibid., 28–29.

165 Ibid., 25–26.

166 Thomas Barrie, *Spiritual Path, Sacred Place: Myth, Ritual, and Meaning in Sacred Architecture* (Boston: Shambhala, 1996); Christopher V. Stroik, *Path, Portal, Path: Architecture for the Rites* (Chicago, IL: Liturgy Training, 1999), 60. Kieckhefer critiques Barrie's lack of liturgical understanding. Kieckhefer, 22, 297 n5.

FIGURE. 2.10 Communio-Raum. St Albertus Magnus, *Andernach Germany* (*Rudolf Schwarz, 1954; Maria Schwarz, Johannes Krämer, Albert Gerhards, 2002*)

Anglican *St Paul's* at Bow Common in London; change in height and width as in *St Gregory of Nyssa* in San Francisco (Figs. 5.2–5.5); an open iconostasis-frame, as in *Notre-Dame de l'Arche de l'Alliance* (Figs. 4.15 and 4.16); distinct colors, as in *St Florian* in München-Riem (Fig. 4.13) and *St Peter* in Wenzenbach (Fig. 3.9); and iconography, as the oriented saints in *St Gregory of Nyssa* in San Francisco (Fig. 5.5) and in *Our Lady of the Angels Cathedral* in Los Angeles (Fig. 4.12).

"I Am the Truth": Verbal Dynamism. Auditorium churches, such as Wright's *Unity Temple*, are functional, spaces suitable for reading, preaching, and singing, in which communion is to a certain extent subordinated to the word. The four advantages of verbal dynamism in an auditorium church are proximity between preacher and congregation who face each other, unified space, and a small size that facilitate interaction. The historical tendency has been for the preacher to become predominant.[167] A recent Roman Catholic church of this type is *Notre-Dame de l'Arche de l'Alliance* (Figs. 4.15 and 4.16), even though the

167 Ibid., 45.

altar obviously has a central place. Also *St François de Molitor* with its upper galleries deploys this verbal dynamism (Fig. 5.7).

"I Am the Life": Social Dynamism. The twentieth-century *domus ecclesiae*, which Kieckhefer names 'modern communal church', has been promoted by Debuyst, Hammond, Sövik, and Turner in the 1960s–1970s. Hospitality, intimacy, flexibility, and participation are the values of this concentric space of a necessary small scale, if overwhelming monumentality that induces passivity is to be avoided. The social, community-building qualities of the church are enhanced, especially the narthex as meeting room. The four advantages of social dynamism in a communal church are a sense of bonding, full participation of the assembly, flexible furnishings, and the emphasis on the narthex as meeting space. Nevertheless, the historical tendency has been the growing self-consciousness of the congregation and predominance of the clergy.[168] In response to James F. White and Susan J. White's argument that neither a longitudinal nor an auditorium church are well suited for sacraments, Kieckhefer replies with the celebration of matrimony being enhanced by kinetic dynamism.[169] Contemporary churches of this type can be found in *St Peter Canisius* in Berlin (Fig. 2.5), *St Franziskus* in Steyr (Fig. 4.7), *Jesus Christus, der gute Hirte* in Frankfurt (Fig. 2.7), *St François de Molitor* in Paris (Fig. 5.7), and *St Gregory of Nyssa Episcopal Church* in San Francisco (Figs. 5.2–5.5), to name only a few.

In his discussion of Giovanni Michelucci's *San Giovanni Battista* (*Chiesa dell' Autostrada*) near Florence (1960–64), which he understands as a communal church on a transversal plan, Kieckhefer makes a vivid parallel with the spatial dynamics between a street performer and his audience, and wonders about the difference between intimacy and proximity, whether anonymous travelers are well served by a communal church.[170] In my view, this opens another discussion, namely the differentiation between worshiping communities, from stable (monastic) to loose (pilgrim churches, road churches, and private chapels), and the need for articulating this differentiation architecturally. In my view, both extremes of the communitarian spectrum tend to be, as contemporary examples as Novy Dvur, Saint-Jean-de-Matha, Mechernich, Villeacerón, and Kamppi suggest, more directly "architecture of transcendence" or *domus Dei.* My hypothesis is that it is the experience of divine mystery that on the one hand holds a monastic community together and needs to find expression in the architectural

168 Ibid., 53.

169 Ibid., 55, responding to James F. White and Susan J. White, *Church Architecture: Building and Renovating for Christian Worship* (Akron, Ohio: OSL Publications, 1998 (1988)), 38–39.

170 Kieckhefer, 56–60.

and spiritual heart of the monastery, and on the other hand is a sign of postmodern re-enchantment as suggested by Zygmunt Bauman and Mark C. Taylor.[171]

Kieckhefer's *Theology in Stone* is replete with theological questions, but dealing more with architects and architectural historians, he draws only occasionally on the thought of theologians, such as Paul Tillich and, rather implicitly, Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Harvey Cox.[172] In his presentation of the title, he is rather sparing in explaining the term 'theology': "Churches have theological significance, but in fluid and complex rather than fixed and simple ways."[173] Consequently, the exquisite title refers more to church architecture than to the book itself. In conclusion, Kieckhefer provides a useful hermeneutic for treating theological questions concerning church architecture. He has proven its value for historical architecture; it is my task to apply his method to contemporary church architecture in a postmodern age.

Constructing the Ineffable

> Ever so often there is a compelling need for sacred space even within everyday life, an incontrovertible necessity that has been confirmed over the centuries by sublime examples, and that has now re-emerged decisively, perhaps in an extreme attempt to respond to the incompleteness of the contemporary dimension.
>
> MARIO BOTTA[174]

Nowadays, interests in so-called 'sacred architecture' often find their literary sedimentation in collective works, having the necessary disadvantage of a theoretical eclecticism. The volume *Constructing the Ineffable: Contemporary Sacred Architecture* gathers twenty contributions of architects, architectural historians, architectural critics, and theologians on the religious dimension in contemporary architecture, including synagogues, museums, memorials, churches, temples, and mosques.[175] The theological issue that gathers these

171 Zygmunt Bauman, *Intimations of Postmodernity* (London: Routledge, 1992), x; Mark C. Taylor, "Revealing Concealment," in *Constructing the Ineffable: Contemporary Sacred Architecture,* ed. Karla Cavarra Britton (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2010), 66–71, at 67.

172 Kieckhefer, 105, 283.

173 Ibid., 19.

174 Mario Botta, "Sacred Space," in *Architetture del Sacro: Prayers in Stone* (Bologna: Editrice Compositori, 2005), 12.

175 *Constructing the Ineffable: Contemporary Sacred Architecture,* ed. Karla Cavarra Britton (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2010). It is the result of a symposium held in

FIGURE. 2.11 Chapel of the Brethren, *Cernosice, Czech Republic* (*Franek Zdenek, 2010*)

interdisciplinary and interreligious contributions together is the place of the sacred in today's world.

The leading question is whether the ineffable can be constructed. The book can be seen as providing twenty different answers to this question. For some, this is impossible. For others, "an intense interplay between materiality and form can give rise to a sense of transcendence in built form."[176] Hence, a human construction permits the ineffable to be heard.

The book has three parts, according to theory, precedents, and practice. Five essays formulate the theoretical foundations of the book, relating architecture to the sacred. The architectural historian Vincent Scully explores the sacred in natural and built form throughout history. The two questions that he provides are relevant for all the contributions: *What has been sacred in the past? What is*

October 2007 at the Yale School of Architecture in collaboration of the Yale Institute of Sacred Music. The religions represented include Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, and Baha'i.

176 Karla Cavarra Britton, "Prologue: The Case for Sacred Architecture," in *Constructing the Ineffable: Contemporary Sacred Architecture,* ed. Karla Cavarra Britton (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2010), 12–23, at 18.

sacred to us today? And how may it be embodied in architectural form?[177] The philosopher Karsten Harries argues that architecture needs the sacred in order to be able to address the whole human person. The theologian Miroslav Volf argues that sacred architecture, including monuments and museums, are sites of sacred memory. The theologian Mark C. Taylor understands secularity as a religious phenomenon, and the contemporary return of the religious as post-modern. Finally, the Baptist ethicist Emilie Townes draws on Eliade to highlight the role of sacred architecture in providing a meaningful *center*.[178]

The next section offers four essays presenting modern and late modern precedents of architectural interpretations of the sacred. A concern for the spiritual was an essential dimension, in addition to the rationalism to which modernist architecture is often reduced. Thomas Beeby focuses on Rudolf Schwarz, whereas Kenneth Frampton presents Tadao Ando's work as 'secular spirituality' that critiques contemporary consumerist culture. Diana Eck explores light in Hindu temples, and Jaime Lara draws on Niemeyer, Breuer, and Candela to argue that architects must be futurists and visionaries in communicating religious meaning in new circumstances.

After the conceptual and historical sections, the last part gathers eight representative, not exhaustive, contributions by architects reflecting on their own religious work. The point of this "complex portrait" of the architect's competence to construct the ineffable is more reflective than descriptive, more introspective than analytical, revealing also the existential questions that occur during the creative design process. The essays reflect multiple responses to what is sacred (and thus, what is profane). Most of them argue that symbolic associations are personal, and no particular religious narrativity should therefore be imposed by the architect. Only light, emptiness, and silence seem to be of relevance for the sacred dimension of architecture. "Beyond any defined liturgical or representational program, a work of sacred architecture challenges the architect to render in plastic form that which cannot be conceptually described."[179] Because of this question of transcendence that exceeds the individual imagination, "the constructive materiality of these projects becomes

177 Vincent Scully, "The Earth, the Temple, and Today," in *Constructing the Ineffable: Contemporary Sacred Architecture,* ed. Karla Cavarra Britton (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2010), 26–47, at 27.

178 Emilie M. Townes, "Constructing the Immaterial in Spaces Large and Small," in *Constructing the Ineffable: Contemporary Sacred Architecture,* ed. Karla Cavarra Britton (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2010), 72–79, at 79.

179 Karla Cavarra Britton, "Perspectives: Contemporary Expressions of the Ineffable," in *Constructing the Ineffable: Contemporary Sacred Architecture,* ed. Karla Cavarra Britton (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2010), 132–133, at 133.

a focus of great concern."[180] The interventions also have an important social impact on the environment. Considering here only church buildings, Steven Holl presents his *Chapel of St. Ignatius* (Figs. 3.6–3.8), Rafael Moneo his *Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels* (Figs. 4.10–4.12), and Richard Meier his *Jubilee Church* (Figs. 2.8 and 2.9). The other contributions gather synagogues, mosques, temples, museums, and memorial sites.

In this volume, religious architecture is seen as an opportunity to express dimensions that are lacking in our rationalist world: "Through the religious building type, many modernists may be seen to explore alternative forms of expression as a tentative response to the dominant rationalist and techno-scientific *Zeitgeist* typically understood to be the underlying common denominator in the evolution of twentieth-century architecture."[181] Britton deplores that many studies of modern architecture have overlooked the significant role of religious building as sites of exploration and experimentation.[182] Álvaro Siza recently claimed that the history of architecture could be done through religious buildings alone, so important are they in representing symbolic and technical evolutions.[183] In the past, religious architecture has often been the occasion for technical and expressive innovation in architecture.[184] But also today, contemporary churches by starchitects are frequently visited and written about.

All the contributions acknowledge a hierarchy of spaces: spaces are not homogeneous. Traditionally – and the contributions of Taylor and Townes are no exceptions – the Romanian scholar Mircea Eliade is named in the distinction between sacred and profane spaces. Nevertheless, although I acknowledge the need for hierophanous spaces in the homogeneous and dehumanizing "junkspace" of our contemporary cities, I would nuance the harsh separation between sacred and profane advanced by Eliade, in which profane space is chaotic and formless expanse opposed to meaningful centers of ordered sacred space.[185] This is too dualistic and antithetical to be true. With Kieckhefer and

180 Ibid.

181 Britton, *Prologue*, 14.

182 Ibid., 15. For instance, Britton demonstrates how Wright's *Unity Temple* (1905) and Perret's *Notre Dame du Raincy* (1921) innovated architecture in general, especially in the handling of exposed concrete.

183 "Álvaro Siza and Alexandros N. Tombazis in conversation," *Arquitectura Ibérica,* special edition on Holy Trinity Church, Fátima (Sep 2007): 92.

184 Robert A.M. Stern, "Preface," in *Constructing the Ineffable: Contemporary Sacred Architecture,* ed. Karla Cavarra Britton (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2010), 6–7, at 7.

185 Mircea Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1959), 13, 20.

Brown – who deplorably are not mentioned in this collective work – I prefer to speak of a sacramentality of association and presence.

Remarkably, in this book on the sacredness of architecture, where one would expect it, the phenomenological dimension and importance of the human *body* – and architecture as sculptural *body* – is absent. Even Holl's account is rather anecdotal and even hermeneutic-semiotic, developing the *idea* of the bottles in a box (*conceived space*), not the plasticity that Pallasmaa hails (*perceived space*).

The reflections on sacrality, violence, and memory, as articulated in Holocaust memorials (Taylor, Safdie, Eisenman, Tigerman) are an interesting theme for the understanding of sacrality in today's world. Whereas in Volf's essay, sacred memory is memory of the *sacred*; in Taylor's contribution, it is memory of the *wounds of terror* – as expressed in the *Chapel of Reconciliation* (Figs. 3.2–3.5), as we will see.

This volume is in the first place concerned with what I have called *synaesthetic space*, for it emphasizes the ineffable, leaving aside questions of liturgy and common use (*Eucharistic space*). This has a disadvantage, as reported by Karla Cavarra Britton:

> Either from the common or more liturgical point of view, a preoccupation with the 'ineffable' may seem unnecessarily esoteric and abstruse. This perspective surely presents one of the greatest conundrums faced by the interlocutors in this volume: to what extent is the ineffable the product of a deliberate intentionality […], and to what extent is it the product of the unpredictability of human activity and projection?[186]

Surely, the answer will have to combine both aspects, intentionality and unpredictability, as we will see with Tillich, a cooperation of divine and human spirit.

Because *Constructing the Ineffable* is published by a school of architectural design, there is no need to formulate an apology for the *contemporariness* of sacred architecture. This would be the case were the volume to have been published by liturgists or historians. Their question – how can architecture be sacred? – leads them *from architecture* to spirituality, or from construction to the ineffable, whereas liturgists and theologians would start from an understanding of the experience of the ineffable and move then towards architecture – how can the sacred be revealed within architecture? Whereas the former ask about the power of architecture, the latter focus on the power

186 Britton, *Prologue*, 20.

of the sacred. There is no call for historicism. The point of view is persuadingly contemporary. The pictures in the book are empty, with occasional visitors: it is the museal aspect of sacred architecture that comes to the fore.

Let me now explore how Tadao Ando dealt with the sacred in his church architecture. Even though dating from the eighties, they are still paradigmatic for contemporary church architecture.

Case Studies: Three Precursors of the Eighties

> Light is not simply what illuminates the cathedral interior, the icon, or the stained glass window. Light is itself the icon. […] There is theological content here that is profoundly universal, drawing on the image of Christ as the light that the darkness has not overcome. […] But will that diffuse light, which is everywhere, kindle a piece of paper lying on the ground? No, it's only when the lens is ground and brings the light to focus that it leaps into flame.
>
> DIANA ECK[187]

One of the most influential architects today, the Japanese autodidact Tadao Ando (°1941) creates "complex works of extreme simplicity that are rooted in and yet transcend their regionality."[188] Many of the most recent monographs on contemporary sacred space include references to his oeuvre.[189] His four

187 Diana Eck, "Temples of Light," in *Constructing the Ineffable: Contemporary Sacred Architecture,* ed. Karla Cavarra Britton (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2010), 112–119, at 119.

188 Judith Dupré, *Churches* (New York: HarperCollins, 2001), 140–141. See also *Tadao Ando: Complete Works*, ed. Francesco Dal Co (London: Phaidon, 1996). Earlier, I discussed Ando's use of the cross in "Ando's Cross: From Representation to Expression," *Faith and Form* 47/2 (2014): 22–25.

189 See Kenneth Frampton, "Corporeal Experience in the Architecture of Tadao Ando," in *Body and Building: Essays on the Changing Relation of Body and Architecture*, eds. George Dodds and Robert Tavernor (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2002), 304–318; Christiane Johannsen, "Spiritual Experience," in *Architecture, Aesth/Ethics and Religion*, ed. Sigurd Bergmann (Frankfurt am Main/London: IKO-Verlag für Interkulturelle Kommunikation, 2005), 187–198; Kenneth Frampton, "The Secular Spirituality of Tadao Ando," in *Constructing the Ineffable: Contemporary Sacred Architecture,* ed. Karla Cavarra Britton (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2010), 96–111; Jin Baek, "Emptiness and Empty Cross: Tadao Ando's Church of Light," in *Divinity Creativity Complexity*, ed. Michael Benedikt (Austin, TX: University of Texas, 2010), 180–193; and Phyllis Richardson, "Introduction: A Legacy of Inspired Innovation," in *New Sacred Architecture* (London: Laurence King, 2004), 6–15.

modest chapels (1986–1993) belong to the United Church of Christ in Japan, founded in 1942 in order to integrate Presbyterian, Methodist, Congregational, and Baptist denominations, following a directive of the ultra-nationalistic government. Today, these buildings still have such a contemporary character that they surprise to be already more than twenty years old.

Ando's work is unmistakably spiritual, even for a non-believer. One does not need to look for his religious work to notice this: also his 'secular' work, including museums and houses, radiate a solid, silent, personal, and cosmic spirituality. Great architecture is spiritual, no matter its 'subject matter' (if it is 'religious' or not). Ando's most famous Christian buildings are without doubt the *Church on the Water* in Tomamu (1988) and the *Church of the Light* in Ibaraki near Osaka (1989). Both chapels are extraordinary statements about the ineffable that breaks into our world. Even photographs cannot restrain the fact that these buildings effectively make room for the ineffable. That is the power of great architecture: when even two-dimensional renderings cannot withhold the extraordinary power of manmade places. In this sense, the Harvard scholar Diana L. Eck spoke of the "framing function of architecture": architects do not construct the ineffable, "but they do enable us to see it, and in that sense architecture is a revelatory art. It is training the eye to see, training the soul to deep seeing."[190] This is architecture at its best.

At first glance, all four of his chapels seem to be empty Modernist boxes, the ones we abhor so much nowadays, having rightly compared much of twentieth-century churches to underground garages. It might be surprising and revealing that Ando's language for communicating the ineffable is extremely minimalist. Bare concrete happens to be Ando's favorite material. He goes so far in his preference for this material that he brings its inherent potential to life. Ando polishes his hard, cold, and gray concrete walls until they are smooth, shining, and precious as silk. As such, he uses one of the lowest materials to sing about the highest truths in life. This is the extraordinary paradox of his work, why his work received the epitome of "secular spirituality" by the famous British architectural critic Kenneth Frampton.[191]

One could say that his characteristic is immense respect: respect for the cosmos, respect for the material (even such a despised one as bare concrete), respect for architecture, respect for human life and its mystery. Yes, he creates space for mystery. That does not mean that he exceeds his field by trying to be a theologian. Nevertheless, his work is immensely theological precisely because it is architecture at its best. Many commentators have underlined the spiritual

190 Eck, 113.

191 Frampton, *Secular*, 109.

character of his buildings. Of course, this has roots in his Japanese culture. But instead of laying bare these roots, such as Nishida's philosophy of nothingness and the concept of *shintai*, for which I refer to the excellent essay of Jin Baek, my contribution will be more restraint.[192] In this section, I propose to focus on only one paradigmatic symbol for contemporary church architecture, namely the cross, when it becomes part of minimalist architecture in a Japanese context. I am interested in what then happens to the cross as Christian symbol. I argue that this symbol becomes enriched, without losing anything of its Christian depth, because Ando is a genius in creating universal statements about human life in general.

Moreover, the scope of this approach is limited because I will not delve into the practical or liturgical issues of his churches. There is no tangible evolution in the liturgical setting of Ando's chapels (1986–1993), being classical longitudinal spaces of two rows of pews with a central aisle leading to an empty space with a movable table and lectern. Ando is no liturgist; his intention is not to explore possibilities of liturgical renewal. His work is more phenomenological. What follows will thus bring to light the power of architecture independently from the liturgical function, which is, in this Protestant case, to gather a community around the proclaimed, preached, and praised Word.

However, Ando has done something more than making space for gathering: he has created monuments and moments for contemplation. These chapels are instruments for inwardness, stillness, and prayer. From themselves, they evoke so much power that any other function becomes secondary. The only thing that seems necessary is to contemplate being as it is, and, what is more, to which we can participate. Ando's strength is to transform us from observers to participants. He starts by placing us in a comfortable position of distant observer. But gradually, one is gently taken in by a fascinating architectural event that opens itself and us to greater things. Both chapels could be compared with a camera: Ando frames a specific part of nature, a landscape in Tomamu and pure light in Ibaraki. With bare concrete, visibly the most man-made material, he places a strange element in the cosmos. This functions as a camera to observe the ineffable depth present in the cosmos. Gradually, one makes abstraction of the box and participates in being. Ando has an immense respect for the spirit of the place:

> A site possesses its own physical and geographical character; at the same time it has layers of memory imprinted on it. I always listen to the whispering voice of a given place. I think of it comprehensively with all

192 Jin Baek, *Nothingness: Tadao Ando's Christian Sacred Space* (New York: Routledge, 2009).

> its forces – the visible characteristics as well as the invisible memories to do with interaction of a locality and humankind. And I try to integrate these into my building which shall carry that spirit to latter generations.[193]

This could still be understood as mere *pantheism*, seeing the cosmos as divine, in the sense of reducing the divine to the cosmos. However, Ando is more of a *panentheist*, by laying bare the divine *within* the cosmos and not necessarily identifying them. The latter, obviously, and not the former, is compatible with Christian theology. What Ando does with the cross as sole Christian symbol in his churches is not incompatible with this cosmic or "secular spirituality." By placing this Christian symbol in a cosmic context, he enriches it instead of denying it "in favor of a cosmogonic spirituality" and overlaying it "with a symbolic nature worship," as Frampton thought.[194]

People make abstraction of the box because it is not Ando's intention to focus on the box, which is a mere medium for an experience of the observing body – in Japanese, *shintai*:

> The body articulates the world. At the same time, the body is articulated by the world. When 'I' perceive the concrete to be something cold and hard, 'I' recognize the body as something warm and soft. In this way, the body in its dynamic relationship with the world becomes the *shintai.* It is only the *shintai* in this sense that builds or understands architecture. The *shintai* is a sentient being that responds to the world.[195]

In the remainder of this study, I will focus only on the rear walls in Ando's three earliest chapels in order to bring to light the use of the cross between representation and expression.[196] In the *Church on Mount Rokko* (1986), Ando places a

193 Ando, quoted in William J.R. Curtis, "Between Architecture and Landscape," *GA Architect: Tadao Ando 1994–2000*, 16 (2000): 8–18, at 11.

194 Frampton, *Secular*, 99, 110.

195 Tadao Ando, "Shintai and Space," in *Architecture and Body* (New York: Rizzoli International, 1988), unpaginated. Similarities can be found with the understanding of *flesh* in French phenomenology.

196 I exclude here the latter *Church* at Tarumi (1993), where Ando opts again for a representational cross on the rear wall, as in his first church on Mount Rokko (1986). On Mount Rokko, he also inserts a cruciform mullion in the glass sidewall, and at the entrance in Tomamu, he reiterates four Greek crosses around a void. He thus plays with the cruciform element.

slender, metallic cross on the rear wall. This cross is the only tool for designating this building formally as Christian (*kerygmatic space*). As such, Ando uses it merely as *representational* sign, in order to *decode* the buildings as Christian. This is the basic reference to which I will compare his gestures of genius in Tomamu and Ibaraki.

Ando's *Church on the Water* at Tomamu (1988) opens entirely to the cosmos, in which he placed a freestanding, Latin cross in steel, similar to what Kaija and Heikki Siren did in the *Technical University Chapel* at Otaniemi, Finland (1956). But Ando's genius consisted in placing his cross in a water basin and sliding away the whole rear glass wall like a giant *shoji* screen, in order to give more direct, intimate contact with the natural essences of water, wind, and light. As such, the cross brings together nature and the sacred, earth and sky, exteriority and interiority, mystery and matter, body and spirit. The cross defines the emptiness as sacred, so that it makes the ineffable palpable. Due to its precise staging in a shallow pond, the cross becomes more than a mere *sign* representing Christianity, such as on Mount Rokko and in Tarumi. In Tomamu, the cross is enriched as expressive *symbol* that yearns for interpretation. The water makes the cross inaccessible, and yet so visibly near. As such, the cross can theologically be understood as eschatological cross of glory, materially expressing at once the visual *already* and the physical *not yet*. The creative genius of this architectural event resides not in the *object* itself but in its *staging*, in its spatial relationship bridging interior and exterior space.

This radical openness of the rear wall is emphasized in the contrast with the other utterly closed concrete walls of the chapel. This is done through the hermeneutic key, or in Ratzinger's words, the "open iconostasis" of a Latin cross, a clear Christian symbol of which one cannot make abstraction. It is there in all its solidity, rooted in the universe as a strange element, as the mysterious slab in Stanley Kubrick's *2001, A Space Odyssey*, as the white rear wall in Thierry De Cordier's *Chapel of Nothingness* at Duffel, Belgium (2008) and in Bob Van Reeth's *Pilgrim chapel* in Westvleteren (2012) (Fig. 3.1), or as the intriguing vertical slit in Christian Kerez' *Chapel* at Oberrealta (1993).

The Protestant theologian Paul Tillich, who wrote on the theological aspects of architecture, was still weary of opening "the building too widely toward surrounding nature," even though he valued the intention to open the church to nature as the idea "to draw nature into the sphere of the Holy Presence."[197] He feared that the opposite would happen, and worshipers "are drawn away from

197 Paul Tillich, "Contemporary Protestant Architecture,": in *On Art and Architecture*, ed. John Dillenberger (New York: Crossroad, 1989), 214–220, at 218.

concentration on the Holy Presence to the outside world." Ando, however, did not open this chapel "widely" towards its surroundings but consciously 'frames' nature and consciously 'stages' a cross in-between exterior and interior spaces. As such, placing the cross as visible witness of the infinite appearing within the finite, Ando allows their invisible relationship to come to the fore. Ando expands sacred space by incorporating the cosmos into the sacred. Tillich legitimately feared the distraction from the liturgical action. There is indeed a strong pull outwards in these churches, which invite for a contemplative mood rather than one focused upon action. Nevertheless, any liturgical action would be enriched by such a wonderful and festive backdrop.

Even though Tomamu and Otaniemi are similar gestures that would have similar Christologies, their pneumatology is different: the Spirit in Tomamu is more cosmic, expansive, and celebrative, whereas the Otaniemi *Spiritus loci* is more restrained, reserved, intimate, and introspective. Space, air, water, and wind are elements that Ando's chapel lays bare more than the Sirens' chapel. In Tomamu, all light is coming from the front, and is identical with the direction of sight, emphasizing much more a spectator's role and a stronger sense of a distant 'there' and a longing. Furthermore, the wood and brick interior of Otaniemi is smoother, warmer, and softer, closer to nature and the human body, than the solid, hard, and polished concrete of Ando's language, which forgets itself in favor of the cosmos. Thus, Tomamu offers more opportunities for the perceiving subject to engage in the tension between exteriority and interiority, or in other words, to perceive the transcendence or Holy Presence of the cosmic reality as an eschatological *heterotopia* (Michel Foucault), a mirror for one's own transcendence or interiority.

Thus, paradoxically, it could be said that the more successful the cosmos is staged *as a transcendent reality*, the more one is drawn back to one's own *interiority*. This is revealed in the nonverbal theology of architecture.

Ando goes even further in his *Church of the Light* (1989). The entire sanctuary wall is a religious symbol: a Latin cross (that rather appears to be a Greek cross) is excised extending over the entire height and width of the concrete wall (8 x 6m). What do we look at? The wall or the cross – which is not really there. This cross is present *as absence*, because it is cut out of the wall. As Christian symbol it is there and not there, that is, not less, but *more* than there. For a Christian, this could be a magnificent symbol of death and resurrection. For Frampton, it is also a "denial in favor of a cosmogonic spirituality. [...] All of Ando's churches are imbued with this conjunction in which both Christian iconography and its Japanese 'other' are simultaneously evoked, although the evocation of the divine depends on the revealed ineffability of nature rather

than on the presentation of conventional symbolism."[198] From a theological perspective, we could say that it is a denial of the *representational* character in favor of its *expressive* dimension. The cross becomes a non-object, a non-place, pure negativity, pure expression. It serves more to *express*, that is, to make present, than to *represent*. In Ibaraki, the cross is made of impalpable light, made *ineffable*.

Ando does more than merely providing a window onto the landscape. He carefully 'stages' nature, and patiently distills natural 'essence', so that nature is served in its awe-inspiring purity. Ando does not treat nature as *landscape* to look at, as *object* at a distance, but as a *dynamism*, because "it is the very transitory and haptic character of natural phenomena that serves to enliven and guarantee the spirituality of his architecture."[199] One could say that his work in Ibaraki is more interiorized, more intimate, than in Tomamu. In a sublime passage that merits to be quoted entirely, the American architectural critic Paul Goldberger contrasts Ando's *Church of the Light* with Fay Jones' *Thorncrown Chapel* (1980) in order to highlight the paradox of how Ando abstracts nature in the most man-made environment in order to come closest to nature:

> We can often come closest to nature by being the most man-made, not by deferring to nature but by actively re-interpreting and almost controlling it, by abstracting it. [...] In Ando nature is almost hidden, mysterious, and awesomely powerful. The concrete structure seems, when you first see it, to suggest no sympathy with nature at all, and no mystery, yet it brings forth the most profound connection to nature and the greatest mystery, as daylight glows through the cross cut into the concrete wall and between the two concrete planes of the entry wall. The Fay Jones chapel is superficially far more spectacular as a structure, and seems, with all that glass and all those ribs and vaults, to be celebrating nature and revealing it, showing us both the glories of nature and the bedazzling abilities of man to a far greater extent than Ando's closed concrete structure. Yet what Ando reveals, of course, is vastly subtler, and infinitely more powerful.[200]

For instance, against the current "homogenization" of light in contemporary society – and in religious buildings bluntly used as cliché for the transcendent,

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198 Frampton, *Secular*, 99.

199 Ibid., 98.

200 Paul Goldberger, "Epilogue: On the Relevance of Sacred Architecture Today," in *Constructing the Ineffable: Contemporary Sacred Architecture*, ed. Karla Cavarra Britton (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2010), 222–231, at 228.

as Edwin Heathcote pointed out (we might think at *Christ the Light Cathedral* at Oakland (2008) (Fig. 3.10) or *Notre-Dame du Rosaire* in Les Lilas (2011) (Fig. 2.4)) – Ando stages light *against darkness*. Faithful to a Japanese tradition 'in praise of shadows',[201] he literally *constructs darkness* in order for light to reveal the ineffable:

> Light, alone, does not make light. There must be darkness for light to become *light* – resplendent with dignity and power. Darkness, which kindles the brilliance of light and reveals light's power, is innately a part of light. […] Here, I prepared a box with thick enclosing walls of concrete – a 'construction of darkness'. I then cut a slot in one wall, allowing the penetration of light – under conditions of severe constraint.[202]

Immediately, this centrifugal moment mirrors back on itself, and one is set within this cosmos and realizes her or his own place. This means that Ando's edifices are never pretty *objects* to look at by a distant subject, but dynamic and relational *events* that must be experienced by a moving body. Because of their strong transcendent appeal they are *domus Dei* even before being *domus ecclesiae.* Even before being defined by their liturgical function as explicitly religious buildings, they are intrinsically religious in their contemplative mood. In this atmosphere, Ando places a cross: not as representative *sign* that one can decipher but as expressive *symbol* that one has to interpret. In a way specific to architecture, Ando stretches its original Christian meaning in order to give it a universal significance. He does so in different ways, and it has been my intention to bring to light the basic itinerary of the cross in Ando's oeuvre between representation and expression.

In this survey, there is a clear evolution in the use of the cross: from a devotional *object* hanging on a wall, over a material *symbol* at an unapproachable distance, to an abstract, dematerialized *absence*, condensed to its pure *meaning*. Important is to hold both dimensions together: such a dematerialization can in architecture only be done by solid materialization. In other words, the spiritual can only be revealed through the material, engaging the corporal. By placing the cross within the cosmos and by abstracting it to pure light, the

201 See the exquisite essay by the Japanese novelist Junichiro Tanizaki, *In Praise of Shadows* (London: Vintage Books, 2001 (1977)).

202 Tadao Ando, "Church of Light," in *Tadao Ando: Complete Works,* ed. Francesco Dal Co (London: Phaidon, 1995), 471. Similarly, but in the context of exploring similar use of light and enlightenment in Hinduism and Christianity, Diana Eck underlines the necessity to focus the light. See Eck, 119.

cross becomes *eschatological*, that is to say, in its shape *anamnesis* of the historical, salvific cross (*already*), and in its staging *prolepsis* of the paradisiacal victory of the end of times (*not yet*).

What is Needed Today: Mystagogic Space

> What we today call progressive innovation
> will soon become traditional.
>
> RICHARD KIECKHEFER[203]

The threefold method that I propose allows distinguishing between three ways in dealing with the sacred in architecture. Some churches, of Debuyst's *organic* type, like Ronchamp (Fig. 2.3) and the *Chapel of St Ignatius* (Figs. 3.6–3.8), connect with the sacred primarily through their well-developed organic qualities of *synaesthetic space.* Others, of the more *analytic* or rational type like Mies's chapel, Schwarz's *Fronleichnamskirche* (Fig. 2.1), Van der Laan's churches, the Abbey church at Novy Dvur (Figs. 6.1 and 6.2), and the *Jubilee church* (Fig. 2.8 and 2.9), connect with the sacred primarily through their Modernist *kerygmatic space.* Finally, there are the churches of the *communal* type, like *St Laurentius* (Fig. 2.2), Tesar's church in Wien-Donaucity (Fig. 5.1) and *St Gregory of Nyssa* (Figs. 5.2–5.5), which are wrapped around the liturgy in order to reveal their *Eucharistic space*.

Naturally, all these dimensions can be found intertwined to a greater or lesser degree in any church. The reality is often complex. The aim of this typology is not to classify but to clarify, to lay bare bridges to the holy by way of creating a *sacred* or *mystagogic* space, in its three dimensions of *synaesthetic, kerygmatic,* and *Eucharistic space.* The first type connects with the sacred through atmospheric awe of the object *as* (architectural) *event*, and invites one to wander around and contemplate in gleeful and playful discovery a multiplicity of new perspectives. The second type asks more of the mind and provides one ordered perspective, the main transparent 'idea' of the church, which is easy to grasp and for which the body is not primarily addressed. One is invited, not in first instance to wander around, but to sit quietly and to contemplate. Finally, the third type invites one to *do* rather than to be, to move liturgically and not in the first place to contemplate. Its starting point is not the object but the (liturgical) *event*. The sacred is primarily encountered through the communitarian *use* of the building. It is my hypothesis that, in reaction to

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203 Kieckhefer, 291.

FIGURE 2.12 Autobahnkirche Siegerland, *Wilnsdorf, Germany* (*Schneider + Schumacher, 2013*). *Exterior*

the currently overemphasized second dimension (*kerygmatic space*) inherited from modernism, our postmodern times particularly are in need of the first (*synaesthetic*) and last dimensions (*Eucharistic space*), which are however insufficient in themselves, and need the symbolic hermeneutic provided by kerygmatic space.

One delightful prototype (and already a classic) is the *Autobahnkirche Siegerland* in Wilnsdorf (2013), an open chapel alongside a German highway. Profusely displaying the white color proper to Modernism – *Fronleichnamskirche* (Fig. 2.1), *Jubilee church* (Fig. 2.9) – it critically converts it by humorously adopting the archetypal shape of a traditional village church and duplicating it (Fig. 2.12). Similar to Peter Eisenman's Monument in Berlin, this is Critical Modernism. Inside, the atmosphere completely changes. Whereas the exterior was *kerygmatic* and humorous, telling a message to the road users, the interior is surprisingly *synaesthetic* and hospitable, made of wood and curves, evoking organical archetypes of warmth and womb (Fig. 2.13). Obviously, the space is not *Eucharistic* in addressing a liturgical community but it is *Eucharistic* in addressing a virtual 'community' of passers-by: the intention of such a chapel is to provide (more than mere) rest similar to the *Chapel of Reconciliation*

FIGURE 2.13 Autobahnkirche Siegerland, *Wilnsdorf, Germany* (*Schneider + Schumacher, 2013*). *Interior*

(Figs. 3.2–3.5). Yes, it might be so that such chapels are paradigmatic of our times. In that sense, not the *Jubilee church*, but the *Autobahnkirche Siegerland* is the classic of our postmodern age.

We have arrived at the end of Part I of this book, by exploring the foundations of a theotopy: now we can proceed in laying bare the three dimensions of mystagogic space. This chapel has introduced us right where we should start: in *synaesthetic space.*

PART 2

Mystagogic Space

FIGURE 3.1 Pilgrim Chapel, *Westvleteren, Belgium* (*Bob Van Reeth, 2012*)

CHAPTER 3

Synaesthetic Space: Space and Light

Approaching a Church – Approaching the Mystery

Even art forms such as architecture that seem opposed to it are drawn into the simultaneity of aesthetic experience, either through the modern techniques of reproduction, which turns buildings into pictures, or through modern tourism, which turns travelling into browsing through picture books.

HANS-GEORG GADAMER, *Truth and Method* (1975 (1960)), 86.

The triangle is at first "space," a blurred image. Recognizing the triangle requires the prior identification of corners – that is, places. A neighborhood is at first a confusion of images to the new resident; it is blurred space "out there." Learning to know the neighborhood requires the identification of significant localities, such as street corners and architectural landmarks, within the neighborhood space.

YI-FU TUAN, *Space and Place* (1977), 17–18.

Modern commercial existence muddles the question of what is essential. […] We live our lives in constructed spaces, surrounded by physical objects. But, born into this world of things, are we able to experience fully the phenomena of their interrelation, to derive joy from our perceptions? […] Everything which is tangibly present must receive attention. If the media make us passive receivers of vacuous messages, we must firmly position ourselves as activists of consciousness.

STEVEN HOLL, *Questions of Perception* (1994), 41.

Alongside the prevailing architecture of the eye,
there is a haptic architecture of the muscle and the skin.

The ultimate meaning of any building is beyond architecture; it directs our consciousness back to the world and towards our own sense of self and being. Significant architecture makes us experience ourselves as complete embodied and spiritual beings. In fact, this is the great function of all meaningful art.

JUHANI PALLASMAA, *The Eyes of the Skin* (1996), 70, 11.

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Perceiving Limits that Create Space

> The gondolas we passed moved dreamlike above the water like black, misshapen swans from bouts of whimsy and nightmare. The sun broke out from behind a cloud bank, and I witnessed again the moment when Venice changed for me the nature of light. Light was beautiful everywhere, but only in Venice did it complete itself fully. In the city where the mirror was invented, each palace along the canal preened like snowflakes in their unholdable images of water. [...] As I sat studying the shapes of flamboyant palaces, the city looked as though a troupe of organ grinders and manic chess players had designed it for the praise of glassblowers. Its celebration of pure whimsy made it a playground and a conundrum, a place where decadence had both a field day and a day off. It always made me wish I was a flashier, less serious man.
>
> PAT CONROY[1]

These words by the American novelist Pat Conroy not only describe, but also effectively bring to life the attractive *genius loci* of Venice, even for one who has not yet been there. Does contemporary church architecture create a similar playground for dreaming of life as it could be and celebrating life as it is, making us flashier, less serious? Does its space as foucaldian heterotopia change the nature of light, stretching the possible? This brings to mind Lefebvre's praise of Venice's sophisticated and yet unsought architectural unity.[2] When an architect is acclaimed, it is usually for her mastery of the interaction between light and space. Building on Lefebvre's *perceived space*, I call space *synaesthetic* when it involves all the senses.[3] Hence, instead of reducing architecture to the visual, it should be listened to. Once in a while, a building succeeds in the mystery of a 'singing' (Valéry) *genius loci*.

A theology of architecture does not start from the eventual symbolic (allegorical, numerical, representational) *significance* of a building. Before any exterior meaning addressed to our mind, the spacious interaction between space and light is meaningful to our body. Buildings are more than containers to be used and signs to be decoded. In this chapter, I examine the *specificity* of architecture within the arts. Similar to music, architecture has the advantage

1 Pat Conroy, *Beach Music* (New York: Doubleday, 1995), 40–41.

2 See Chapter 1 and PE 89–90 (PS 73–74).

3 Similar to such multi-sensory experience, Bachelard spoke of the "polyphony" of senses. Gaston Bachelard, *The Poetics of Reverie,* 6, quoted in Juhani Pallasmaa, *The Eyes of the Skin: Architecture and the Senses* (London: Academy Editions, 1996), 41.

of being *non-representational* (as such defined negatively), but is, contrary to music, intrinsically *material*.[4] Both aspects are theologically relevant. Architecture neither addresses the mind nor the eyes alone but the body as a whole. This *synaesthetic* experience makes architecture an important interlocutor in theology.

Phenomenology seems to be the adequate discipline to give an account of this synaesthetic *immediacy* of non-verbal communication. In this chapter, I draw upon phenomenology in order to clarify the experience of *synaesthetic space* that remains invisible (as *defect*) for the one for whom architecture is a mere utilitarian thing for *liturgical* purposes (*domus ecclesiae*) or for proclaiming a Christian *identity* (*domus Dei*). This experience remains invisible (as *excess*) for the one who approaches the mystery. In this chapter, I describe the body-concerned experience of architecture, by being attentive to its Vitruvian *firmitas* (structure, solidity, materiality). *Synaesthetic space* is theologically relevant in discerning what makes a place sacred and how aesthetic and religious experiences relate. Le Corbusier would always refer to the "miracle of ineffable space" when asked about his religious beliefs.[5] By addressing the body as a whole, architecture plays an essential role in approaching the divine Mystery.

Phenomenology gives answers to aesthetics that are too laterally subject- or object-oriented by emphasizing the subject as *embodied* and the object as 'haptic *event*.'[6] Holl points out the phenomenological role of architecture to become "activists of consciousness." The architectural experience is at once *fragmentary*, because it depends on the moving body, and *whole*, because it engages our whole corporeality. Holl describes this type of fragmentation as a concentration and heightening of one's awareness of self and environment.

A phenomenology of architecture is theologically relevant because it lays bare the "corporal intellection" of the body against a hegemonic visual paradigm. Architecture is not made to be looked at, but to be dwelled in. A phenomenology of architecture is usually based on the thought of Martin Heidegger and Maurice Merleau-Ponty.[7] Instead of developing this line, for

4 See below, Dufrenne's insightful distinction between matter and material.

5 William J. Curtis, *Le Corbusier: Ideas and Forms* (London: Phaidon, 1986), 179.

6 For architecture as 'haptic event,' see especially Juhani Pallasmaa, *The Eyes of the Skin: Architecture and the Senses* (London: Academy Editions, 1996). *Haptics* refer to non-verbal communication, and *haptic* to the sense of touch in particular.

7 The choice to discuss Merleau-Ponty, Marion, and Dufrenne in a context of architecture might appear unlucky, because they advance painting as the paradigm of art, which seems to privilege vision over the other senses (although that was certainly not their intention). With this caution in mind, they prove to be useful for my purposes. I have included

which there are major reference works,[8] my contribution to a phenomenology of architecture will be twofold. First, I will explore the experience of architecture by examining *two case studies* of present-day chapels, peppered with the thought of contemporary architects who have an outspoken interest in the phenomenological dimension of architecture (Holl, Pallasmaa, Zumthor). Second, I will clarify and develop the results of this *theotopy* by borrowing three concepts (atmosphere, expressed world, saturated phenomenon) of *phenomenologists* who are not commonly referred to in architecture (Böhme, Dufrenne, Marion).

The two case studies of this chapter have a pronounced *genius loci* or *synaesthetic space* that is understandable to all who have a human body, as the first *approach* to the Mystery, even before being kerygmatically introduced into it (*entering*) or Eucharistically gathered by it (*appropriating*). A place is neither primarily sacred as *kerygmatic space* (word and image) addressed to the mind, nor as *Eucharistic space* (dance and garden) addressed to the eschatological imagination, but as *synaesthetic space* (space and light) addressed to the body.

Made in the first place for short individual visits before retaking the road, both chapels stand alongside a path as invitations to rest in the midst of restlessness. What these occasional visitors need most is a *synaesthetic space* that heightens the awareness of one's place in the world. Hence, their theological essence is one of a still *anonymous* and *faceless* sacredness addressed to human beings, believers and non-believers alike. Whereas the first case study is an architectural statement on *limits* that create *space* instead of inhibiting it, the second is a play of *light* that kneads primary matter and *texture* into a bodily event.

Merleau-Ponty in order to situate the architectural phenomenology of Stephen Holl and Juhani Pallasmaa, who both draw on him.

8 Steen Eiler Rasmussen, *Experiencing Architecture* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1959); Kent C. Bloomer and Charles W. Moore, *Body, Memory and Architecture* (New Haven, CT and London: Yale University Press, 1977); Christian Norberg-Schulz, *Genius loci: Towards a Phenomenology of Architecture* (London: Academy Editions, 1980); *Dwelling, Place and Environment,* ed. David Seamon and Robert Mugerauer (New York: Columbia University Press, 1989); Christopher Day, *Places of the Soul: Architecture and Environmental Design as a Healing Art* (Oxford: Architectural Press, 2004 (1990)); Steven Holl, Alberto Pérez-Gómez, and Juhani Pallasmaa, *Questions of Perception: Phenomenology of Architecture* (1993); Juhani Pallasmaa, *The Eyes of the Skin: Architecture and the Senses* (London: Academy Editions, 1996); Peter Zumthor, *Thinking Architecture* (Basel: Birkhäuser, 2010); Thomas Barrie, *The Sacred In-Between: The Mediating Roles of Architecture* (New York: Routledge, 2010); *From the Things Themselves: Architecture and Phenomenology,* eds. Benoît Jacquet and Vincent Giraud (Kyoto: Kyoto University Press/EFEO, 2012).

Space. Chapel of Reconciliation*, Berlin* (*2000*)

> [Jesus] knew that if they recognized him as a powerful judge they would be shattered by the terror of his majesty and overwhelmed by the sheer presence of God unveiled. Thus, veiled in a human body he was able to communicate with humans. He who wanted to assist the guilty hides the fact that he was a judge. He who did not deny dignity to faithful servants conceals his lordship. He who desired the weak to be embraced by a parent's love covers his majesty.
>
> PETER CHRYSOLOGUS, *Sermons* 29,4

The small Evangelical *Chapel of Reconciliation* (2000) stands in the scar of the desolate no-man's land where once the Berlin Wall separated East from West (Fig. 3.2).[9] Its modest architecture is the reflection of a communitarian process

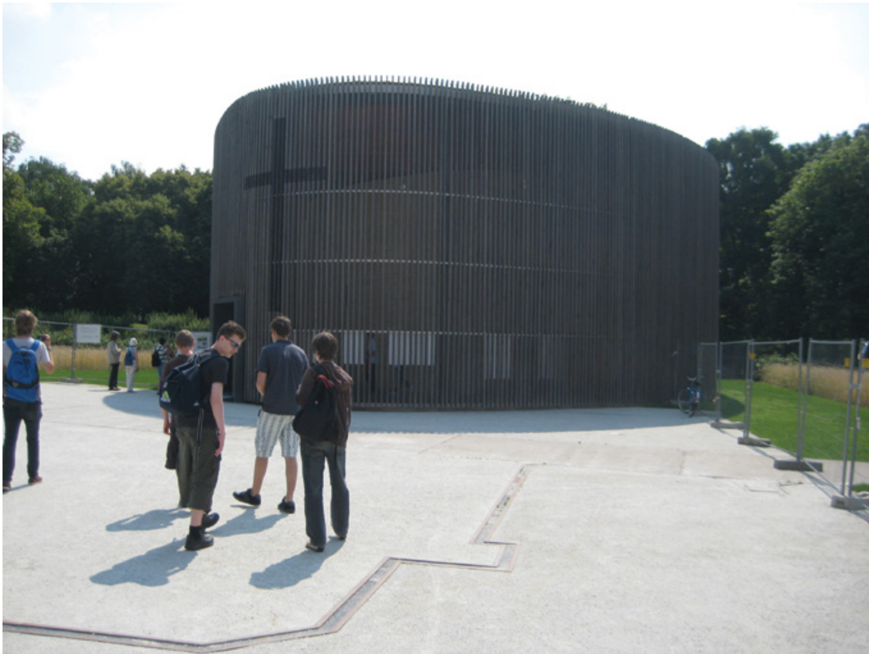

FIGURE 3.2 Chapel of reconciliation, *Berlin, Germany* (*Rudolf Reitermann, Peter Sassenroth, 2000*). *Exterior*

9 The *Chapel of Reconciliation*, 9 m high and 18,5 m wide, was designed by the young Berlin architects Rudolf Reitermann (°1965) and Peter Sassenroth (°1963) with the collaboration of the rammed-earth work of Martin Rauch, and is open from Tuesday till Sunday, 10am–5pm. http://versöhnungskapelle.de/inhalt/kapelle/index.htm [accessed July 7, 2012]

of articulating more than a wounded *genius loci*: the community desired to create space as *Spiritus loci*, a place of memory and hope, in which visitors would encounter reconciliation.[10] At the same time as it recalls a painful history, the chapel prophetically "embodies faith that Christ's presence transforms this place of death into a space that holds experiences of resurrection, however fragmented they might seem."[11] This "eschatological anamnesis" found its strongest symbol in stone fragments from the former church that are incrusted as relics in the clay wall.[12] The community intuited that memory could be a power for change when a place retains the scars of wasteland, War, and Wall.[13] The wounded past is at the core of this new beating heart.

The oval chapel, sitting back against a canvas of green trees, is "a negligible mark" on the "palimpsest of terror and division" that the community chose to preserve as desolately as possible, showing the guards' path and the footprint of the former church.[14] "Without claims to its own longevity," the fragile building is nothing more than a cylindrical shed with a translucent skin of vertical lamellas in inexpensive Canadian Douglas fir as its honest handshake and ambassador. A dark tattooed cross is the only emblematic ornament that defines this building as Christian. Expressing in sculpture what the chapel

---

10 The community does not speak in terms of Spirit, but explicitly wanted a sacred place with a definite Christian identity, albeit open to non-believers, something more than a mere monument remembering the past and more than a multi-purpose room. It is called a chapel for "its elementary significance [...] as a place of peace, reflection, personal contemplation, and the encounter with central life questions." Ulrike Braun, *Versöhnungskirche: Kapelle der Versöhnung* (Berlin: Evangelische Versöhnungsgemeinde Selbstverlag, 2003), 40.

11 Andrea Bieler and Luise Schottroff, *The Eucharist: Bodies, Bread, and Resurrection* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2007), 190.

12 Ibid., 192. I suggest that these tangible remnants could also be seen as "thorn in the flesh." (2 Co 12:7) The chapel's first predecessor, the *Church of Reconciliation*, was consecrated in 1894 in a gothic revival style. After World War II, the parish was divided between the Soviet and the French sectors of the city. Over ninety percent of the parishioners lived in the French sector, but the church stood on Soviet ground. Due to severe damage during the war, the church was rebuilt in 1950. In 1961, the Wall that would divide East and West for twenty-eight years was built at the doorstep of the church, which became part of the forbidden Death Strip. In order to increase the "safety, order, and cleanliness at the border," this church was finally blown up in 1985. Braun, 31.

13 For instance, a glass panel in the floor reveals an unexploded bomb from World War II on the basement steps of the former church, in a glance of depth bridging wasteland, War, and Wall.

14 These and the following quotes are taken from Phyllis Richardson, *New Sacred Architecture* (London: Laurence King Publishing, 2004), 78–80.

does in architecture, a bronze statue of a kneeling couple in an immensely sad embrace brings to mind not only numerous separated families, but also East and West finally reconciled.

In contrast to the hard impermeability of the Wall, the simple chapel has a porous skin that reveals its sacred heart at night, bringing "unusual lightness and grace in a setting that is heavy with history." Its lack of pretention is a religious symbol of humility as an answer to violence. Instead of a Wall that inhibits space, the chapel is made of two shells (of wooden lamellas and grainy clay) that create space. Although small, the chapel deploys different spatial experiences.

The delightfully paradoxical open-air intimacy of the *ambulatory* with the function of transitional, meeting, and exhibition space sways freely around the dense 'yolk' of the sanctuary, a walkway to wander, wonder, and watch the world without being watched (Fig. 3.3). The vertical lamellas might evoke the bars of a prison. Being defined by the two shells of wooden lamellas and grainy clay, the sensuous oscillation of the ambulatory devoid of Christian imagery "emphasizes the break in strict geometry" and defies familiar forms of sacred spaces and of sacredness. Instead of fencing off the sacred, the architects created a translucent threshold between sacred and profane as a pivotal "neutral zone" that transfigures its adjacent territories into sacred worlds, as the ritual theorist Arnold van Gennep has suggested:

> Because of the pivoting of sacredness, the territories on either side of the neutral zone are sacred in relation to whoever is in the zone, but the zone, in turn, is sacred for the inhabitants of the adjacent territories. Whoever passes from one to the other finds himself physically and magico-religiously in a special situation for a certain length of time: he wavers between two worlds. It is this situation which I have designated as transition.[15]

Poor in symbols and open to nature, the ambulatory incarnates two characteristics of *liminal space* in which a society comes to terms with collective wounds, by allowing *communitas* to emerge as "being no longer side by side (and, one

15 Arnold Van Gennep, *Les Rites de Passage* (Paris: Librairie Critique Émile Nourry, 1909; Mouton: Maison des Sciences de l'Homme, 1969), 24 [*The Rites of Passage,* trans. Monika B. Vizedom and Gabrielle L. Caffee (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1960), 18]. Arnold van Gennep used *liminality* to define the in-between threshold phase of *rites de passage* (neither *here* nor *there*). He distinguished between *preliminal* (separation), *liminal* (transition), and *postliminal* rites (incorporation).

FIGURE 3.3 Chapel of reconciliation, *Berlin, Germany* (*Rudolf Reitermann, Peter Sassenroth, 2000*). *Ambulatory*

might add, above and below) but *with* one another of a multitude of persons" moving towards one goal and yet facing the others, "flowing from *I* to *Thou*":

> It is in liminality that communitas emerges. […] Major liminal situations are occasions on which a society *takes cognizance of itself*. […] Liminality,

> then, often draws on poverty for its repertoire of symbols, particularly for its symbols of social relationship. [...] An important component of the liminal situation is [...] an enhanced stress on nature at the expense of culture. [...] One dies *into* nature to be reborn *from* it. [...] In a situation which is temporally liminal and spatially marginal the neophytes or 'passengers' in a protracted *rite de passage* are stripped of status and authority.[16]

Inside, the chapel "remarkably defies heaviness of reference or iconography."[17] (Fig. 3.4) This lightness in response to heaviness is one of the reasons for its success. Its bright emptiness is defined by the grainy clay of the embracing wall. Symbolically, clay evokes creation and healing.[18] Not only the wall, but also the floor and the altar-table are made out of clay. The organic and fragile materials of wood and clay define the *synaesthetic space* of the chapel, which was first intended to be built in the less engaging materials of concrete, steel, and glass.

The skylight lifts up the gaze to the heavens. The embracing gesture of the curved shell evokes archetypes of womb, nest, and hearth. The shape of this nucleus is born out of a circle, the most elementary form of a communitarian gathering. This circle, only visible on a floor plan, is widened into an oval in order to include the suggestion of a narthex and a sanctuary – although there

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16 Victor Turner, "Passages, Margins, and Poverty: Religious Symbols of Communitas," in *Dramas, Fields, and Metaphors: Symbolic Action in Human Society* (London and Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1974), 231–271, at 232, 239, 245, 252–253, 258. He prefers the Latin term to 'community' in order to distinguish this modality from mere 'common living.' A society needs liminal spaces for *communitas* to emerge: "Communitas breaks in through the interstices of structure, in liminality; at the edges of structure, in marginality; and from beneath structure, in inferiority. [...] Liminality, marginality, and structural inferiority are conditions in which are frequently generated myths, symbols, rituals, philosophical systems, and works of art." Victor Turner, *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure* (Chicago: Aldine Publishing Company, 1969), "Liminality and Communitas," 94–130, at 128–129. The *Chapel of Reconciliation* is such a place of liminality, marginality, and structural inferiority.

17 Richardson, 80. Without attention to its liturgical use or theological symbolism, Richardson names light, transparency, and inner strength as the main characteristics why the chapel responds well to its context.

18 Clay might bring to an informed Christian mind the Biblical images of the *adamah* (earth) out of which Adam is made, the potter's clay (Jer 18:1–6; Is 64:7), the liturgical reminder of being dust on Ash Wednesday, or the treasure in earthen vessels (2 Co 4:7). Discussing the liminal space during rites of passage, Victor Turner writes that the neophytes "have to be shown that in themselves they are clay or dust, mere matter, whose form is impressed upon them by society." Turner, *Ritual*, 103.

FIGURE 3.4 Chapel of reconciliation, *Berlin, Germany* (*Rudolf Reitermann, Peter Sassenroth, 2000*). *Interior*

is no visible separation between narthex, nave, and sanctuary: there is but one communitarian space.

The 'narthex' is somehow recognizable by the anthracite entrance box, the organ gallery, and the unfortunate pile of chairs that cry out the lack of stocking space, bring unnecessary mayhem, and formulate an awkward welcome – as if one enters through a back door.[19] The 'sanctuary' is distinguishable by the profusion of zenithal light and Christian symbols, such as the modest clay *altar-table* placed meaningfully on top of the mensa of the older church, the tiny bronze *crucifix* of the Armenian artist Chavarch Kachatrian with Jesus's right hand splendidly raised in a relentless blessing, and the overpowering neo-Gothic oak *retable*, which is obviously not at home in this confined space.

19 In general, empty chairs cry out their emptiness much louder than fluid lines of empty pews, which are sculptural themselves, as for instance in the *Chapel of St Ignatius* in Seattle and the *Cathedral of Christ the Light* in Oakland. On my last visit to the *Jubilee Church* in Rome, uninspiring plastic chairs had been placed to fit the Sunday congregation. However, during the week, they cry out their ugliness in terms that would be inappropriate to write down, even in a footnote.

The *spatial dynamics* superpose an *eschatological orientation* to the altar-table in the East (*Eucharistic space*) with the *historical axis* of the former church towards the mutilated retable, in which Christ lost his face (*kerygmatic space*). This dark remnant from the former church hangs in an enormous niche that awkwardly grasps all attention, conveying "a real sense of centred gravitas that imbues the structure with genuine meaning against the open framework of the outer shell."[20] This niche might be intended as a side chapel, but takes the role of real sanctuary, especially in the absence of a liturgical gathering around the altar-table (Fig. 3.5). The ceiling timberwork and skylight underline the same axis of remembrance. The axis of hope struggles with the concentration to the mutilated past. Only liturgical gathering can focus the attention back to the future.

With simple materials such as clay and wood, this modest chapel provides a synaesthetic answer of hope to a wounded *genius loci* that believer and non-believer alike understand. Before being a *Eucharistic space* centered on the altar-table of the incarnated Word of God (*domus ecclesiae*) and a *kerygmatic space* that remembers and reinterprets the past, this *synaesthetic space* of fragile but solid simplicity addresses the body.

Alongside the former border strip in Berlin, there are many sites of remembrance for World War II and the Wall, but the *Chapel of Reconciliation* proclaims that this is also a place for the Church to be, as symbol and as gathering place, to embody Christian hope for a better world. Instead of separating the sacred from the profane, the ambulatory is a room with a view, set aside in order to discern divine presence in the world, the sacred *within* the profane. Instead of nostalgic triumphalism, opting intentionally for smaller and less words, the chapel embodies divine and ecclesiological 'displacement' to the margins, similar to Tesar's church in Vienna-Donaucity (Fig. 5.1). Corresponding to Dulles's kerygmatic model, the chapel is a herald of God's kenotic Word in the midst of a devastating no-man's land, providing a name in a land without name: reconciliation.[21]

Applying Lefebvre's terminology, the chapel's *perceived space* (space and light) invites three different spatial practices, whether one is outside, in the ambulatory, or in the inner heart of clay. *Outside*, the *perceived space* is characterized by the wooden lamellas, which attract and inspire mystery. In the airy *ambulatory*, one is invited to walk between the wooden outlook on the world and the grainy clay. *Inside*, one is invited to hold still, surrounded by clay, lit from above, and oriented towards a centering focus, whether past (retable) or

20 Richardson, 80.

21 Avery Dulles, *Models of the Church* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1978), 51–66, 81–94.

FIGURE 3.5 Chapel of reconciliation*, Berlin, Germany* (*Rudolf Reitermann, Peter Sassenroth, 2000*)*. Retable*

"futurity of the present" (altar-table).[22] I suggest that this spatial practice is the theological essence of the building. As an architectural *rite de passage*, one has to physically trespass its two thresholds or shells in order to engage with its spiritual exercise of reconciliation, in order for the libretto to become opera.

In doing so, the *conceived space* (word and image) clinging to the wounds of history is given its due. The strong axis towards the retable recalls the

22 This last term is Rahner's expression for eschatology, as I discuss in Chapter 5.

mutilated past and yet proposes a new symbolism: the 3D-archetypes of womb, nest, and hearth; the healing symbolism of clay; the dynamic play on vision of the lamellas; and the Christian symbolism of cross, altar-table, crucifix, and retable, which contribute to the Christian *conceived space*.[23] Not only the exact *location* is important, but also the universal symbolism of border walls, no matter if it is Berlin, Bethlehem, or beyond. Prophetically, this chapel is a solidified cry in the desert, providing space for reconciliation and challenging real and imaginary fences that separate people from one another.

Finally, the *lived space* (dance and garden) is the liturgical space of reconciliation, in which one enters by bringing into play the *perceived* and *conceived space.* It is possible to discern different *dimensions* of reconciliation that are all theologically relevant. In this chapel, one is invited to be reconciled with history, world, and Church, but also with oneself, the other, and God. More than Christ as God's Name and Face, it is first an anonymous and faceless Spirit that one encounters in this place. In remembering the wounds of war and wall, the chapel allows God's hopeful Voice – another name for the Spirit – to be heard in this wasteland.

According to the oldest definition of the sacred, the chapel is a place "set apart" (Eliade). Its *Spiritus loci* is a Spirit of *wholeness made of fragments*, able to reconcile humanity with its collective and individual past. Only a wounded place of remembrance can offer healing and newness. Its emptiness creates a gathering space for people (*domus ecclesiae*) on a human scale. Its *Spiritus loci* is a Spirit of *reconciliation*, not of vengeance: without hiding the scars of violence, she makes possible an eschatological *lived space*. Its *Spiritus loci* is a Spirit of *hope and beauty*, not of bitterness: she sings of creativity with old material that becomes beautiful when loaded with affective history. Its *Spiritus loci* is a Spirit of *simplicity and humility*, not of triumphalism: she sings of a kenotic God veiling majesty of Judge, Lord, and King in order to be but loving nearness, lifting his right hand in relentless blessing. Its *Spiritus loci* is a Spirit of *rest* in a time of restlessness, not shouting of self-referential power but singing a beautiful, intimate, and prophetic silence for anyone who has ears to hear. Unlike the *genius loci* of separation so proper to the Wall, the *Spiritus loci* here is one of communion, of bridging the gap between nations, cultures, and religions.[24]

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23 Even though places themselves are (3D-)symbols *expressing* the anonymously sacred (space and light), they need (2D-)symbols as footnotes and subtitles in order to *represent* the explicitly Christian sacred (word and image).

24 Similarly, in contrast to separating walls, the Wall Monument by Maya Lin in Washington D.C. (1982) commemorates the names of the fallen during the Vietnam War and

In conclusion, even without defining the sacred as explicitly Christian (discerning its Name and Face) and before any liturgical gathering, the chapel displays more than a wounded *genius loci*: it provides a spatial potential of reconciliation that can be called *Spiritus loci* because she has the characteristics of the Christian God of Revelation. Arranging clay, light, and wood, this modest building creates, with a vocabulary of *past* fragments, a spacious *present* for contemplating an expansive *future*.

Hence, the *Chapel of Reconciliation* carries its name well. As an in-between, transitory space between past and future, outside and inside, profane and sacred, it is a wonderful example of contemporary church architecture, of which humanity may be proud. In Lefebvrian terms, small and vulnerable as it may appear in its *perceived space*, the chapel is grandiose and powerful in its *lived space*, because its disarming simplicity is able to carry and transfigure a heavy *conceived space.* Particularly the *perceived space* of the clay curve and the *lived space* of the airy ambulatory lay bare a specifically architectural symbolism that grounds its *conceived space* as a sacred threshold of reconciliation. It does so less through two-dimensional *iconography* (*conceived space*) than through three-dimensional *topography* (*perceived space*) that has to be practiced bodily (*lived space*). Whereas *images* may *articulate* a more precise theological message, revealing a Divine Name and Face, *places* are more implicit in their *embodiment*. That is why I have treated this case study at this stage of my itinerary, emphasizing the theological importance of *perceived space*. The *Chapel of Reconciliation*, similar to the *Kapel van de ontluiking* (Fig. 1.2), the *Autobahnkirche Siegerland* (Fig. 2.13), and Zumthor's *Bruder Klaus Kapelle* (Fig. 1.9), brings the body first of all into contact with grainy matter. The chapel is a divine bandage on our wounded earth and a victory of spirit that sings of human creativity and of a divine *Spiritus loci.*

***Light.* Chapel of St Ignatius*, Seattle* (*1997*)**

> She found herself forced to sit down on first entering the interior, as she was so completely overcome by emotion and memory. The new building acted like a key for her, unlocking a wealth of internal, unspoken language with unanticipated force.[25]

creates, due to its disarming simplicity, an impressive space of remembrance and reconciliation.

25 Robert A. Ivy recalls an architect's experience at entering the chapel, in "Building Sanctuary," *Architectural Record* (April 1998): 15.

> I was like a child – both awestruck and excited to ask my questions. I could not figure out where all the light was coming from and how did all those colors come through clear windows? How was there so much life there?[26]

The *Chapel of St Ignatius* (1997) is the architectural cornerstone of Seattle University (Fig. 3.6).[27] Smaller than the other university buildings and of

FIGURE 3.6 Chapel of St Ignatius, *Seattle, WA* (*Steven Holl, 1997*). *Exterior*

26 Gerald T. Cobb recalls a student at entering the chapel, in his foreword to Steven Holl, *The Chapel of St. Ignatius* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1999), 11.

27 This chapel has received extensive attention over the years, as witnessed by the amount of presentations and commentaries in distinguished architectural magazines, especially between 1995 and 1999. Whereas most architectural critics safely stick to descriptions of the sensuous phenomenology of this place, without attention to its liturgical enactment, in two articles the philosopher Paul Kidder engages in a suggestive Ignatian reading of the place. See Paul Kidder, "Modern Architecture and Ignatian Vision," *Lonergan Workshop* 15 (1999): 13–25; and "Philosophical Hermeneutics and the Ethical Function of Architecture,"

incomparable shape, the chapel marks the end of a major axis on the university campus and is announced by a green 'thinking field' and a reflecting pond with a green island and a solid rock – on which the Easter fire is lit during the Paschal night.[28] The pond plays the same role as the empty 'breathing space' in the church of *St Canisius* in Berlin (Fig. 4.4), enlarging the sacred space of the chapel proper. The only outlook from inside the chapel is towards the pond. They belong together. Light playfully reflects on the water and dances on the vaults. In a housing project in Fukuoka, Japan (1991), Holl employs water as a "phenomenal lens [...] to ensure emptiness" and "a sense of the sacred."[29]

One enters this chapel by pulling one of the reddened bronze doorhandles in the form of a priestly stole (Fig. 3.7), "where our visual experience becomes tactile."[30] The "handshake" of the building is the promise of how body and building will interact.[31] Inside, the chapel incarnates Holl's paradigm of

Contemporary Aesthetics, Vol. 9 (2011). http://www.contempaesthetics.org/newvolume/pages/article.php?articleID=618 [accessed March 23, 2012] My own experience was nourished by personal visits between March 14–18, 2012, two Eucharistic celebrations (Friday, March 16, at 12.30pm, and Sunday March 18, at 11am), and an interview with Father Gerald T. Cobb SJ, who was the chair of the Chapel Committee, and the associate architect Rick Sundberg on March 16, 2012.

28 Their combination might invite reflections of life and death, of solidity and fluidity, of the organic and the inorganic. In a communitarian appropriation of "sacramental permeability" (Bieler and Schottroff), the pond becomes *lived space* when liturgically used for baptisms.

29 Steven Holl, "Void Space/Hinged Space," in *Urbanisms Working with Doubt* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2009), 204–209, at 205. For Holl, this dancing interplay of void, water, and light is "analogous to a sacred space within the every day world of domestic urban life." See also Steven Holl, "Questions of Perception – Phenomenology of Architecture," in Steven Holl, Juhani Pallasmaa, and Alberto Pérez-Gómez, *Questions of Perception: Phenomenology of Architecture* (Tokyo: A + U Publishing, 1994), 39–120, at 79–80.

30 Paul Kidder, "Modern Architecture and Ignatian Vision," *Lonergan Workshop* 15 (1999): 13–25, at 24. The doorhandles are a continuous reminder for the priest to be a friendly shoulder. Interview with Father Gerald T. Cobb SJ on March 16th, 2012. Seven elliptical lenses in the doors might be a reminder of the 'seven bottles' piercing the roof, and evoke the elliptical spots of summer light through the foliage of a tree, as Holl observes in another context: "Rather than carving out various shapes on the ground according to the openings in the foliage, the sun's rays form similarly shaped elliptical spots of light." Holl, *Questions*, 63.

31 With this metaphor, the Finnish architect Juhani Pallasmaa indicates the capacity of touch, texture, and patina to communicate an emotional range between intimate hospitality and alienating sterility. Pallasmaa, *Eyes*, 56.

FIGURE 3.7 Chapel of St Ignatius, *Seattle, WA* (*Steven Holl, 1997*). *Doorhandle*

architecture "as a series of partial experiences, rather than a totality."[32] One is invited to find her own way through the generous gestures, embracing vaults, and surprising vistas of this womb- and cave-like architectural organism. One steps first into a long hall with a high ceiling and lit brightly from behind. Behind darker and lower spaces, one is seduced by the warm color of the Blessed Sacrament chapel painted in beeswax. The different "phenomenal zones" of this chapel form a whole through the organizing extra-architectural idea of "seven bottles of light in a stone box," modeled upon the Ignatian vision of all divine *gifts* "descending from above […] as the rays of light descend from the sun, and as the waters flow from their fountains."[33] The gathering of

32 Holl, *Questions*, 42.

33 [SpEx 237] Some passages of the Ignatian *Constitutions* show the same image, for instance: "[T]he light to perceive what can best be decided upon must come down from the First and Supreme Wisdom." [Const 711], quoted in Steven Holl, "A Gathering of Different Lights," in *The Chapel of St. Ignatius* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1999), 14–29, at 14–16. See also David Lonsdale SJ, *Eyes to See, Ears to Hear: An Introduction to Ignatian Spirituality* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2000), 81–82. On the idea of the stone box, in a successful attempt to reduce the cost that has released unsuspected creativity, the foreseen stone had to be replaced

different lights refers on the one hand to the nationalities and faiths present on the campus, and on the other hand to the liturgical spaces: narthex, procession hall, worship space, chapel of the Blessed Sacrament, choir, reconciliation chapel, and bell tower over the reflecting pond.[34] Different lights also express the Ignatian pedagogy to see issues in different lights. Four windows to the left of the sloped processional space represent the four weeks of the Spiritual Exercises: *Conversion*, *God's Indwelling*, *Christ's Laboring*, and *Resurrection*. Their narrative symbolism, together with the icons and the carpet evoking scenes of the life of Saint Ignatius of Loyola, paint this *perceived space* of translucent glass into the colors of Ignatian *conceived space*.

In his writings and in his buildings, Steven Holl pleads for architecture that heightens our perception, so that an "everyday act of pressing a door handle and entering into a light-washed room can become profound."[35] In response to one of the tragedies of contemporary urban life to put us "out of touch with the poetry and unpredictability of the everyday change in the weather,"[36] Holl heightens our cosmic awareness through light projected in different color-combinations "like liquid [...] spilling across interior surfaces."[37] The sacredness of the space is due to this immediate dependency on cosmic variations, which are heightened inside the chapel, whereas outside they might pass by unappreciated. In order to heighten the synaesthetic experience of perceived

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by tilt-up slabs of dyed concrete. On the extra-architectural idea: "Though many if not most people who appreciate my work seem to focus on its experiential or phenomenological qualities – the light, the use of materials, and so forth – for me, what is important is the idea." Quoted from *El Croquis* 93 (1999) and *Design Quarterly* 1349 (1988) in Yehudi E. Safran, "Steven Holl: Idea and Method," in *Idea and Phenomena* (2002), 73–83, at 73. See also Holl's collection of watercolor drawings in *Written in Water* (2002). See Holl, *Questions*, 119.

34 The number seven refers to the seven days of Creation and the seven days of the week. This was the argument to maintain seven vessels, instead of the proposed four to reduce the cost, during the process. Holl, *Gathering,* 16.

35 Holl, *Gathering*, 14.

36 Holl, *Questions,* 83.

37 Cobb, 9. A clear lens against a white field in the processional hall, a green lens against a red field in the narthex, a red lens against a green field in the choir, a yellow lens against a blue field in the nave, a blue lens against a yellow field in the sanctuary, a purple lens against an orange field in the Blessed Sacrament chapel, and an orange lens against a purple field in the reconciliation chapel. The ungraspable fluctuation of "projected color" was first implemented in the offices of D.E. Shaw & Co in New York (1991), in order to express the intangible electronic trading of the company: "Color washes offer subtle experiences according to the sunlight entering behind walls, and the mixing of colors projected from unseen surfaces." Holl, *Questions,* 61.

space, Holl is attentive to the "phenomenal properties of the transformation of light through material," as shaped, translucent, or colored glass, and water.[38]

Texture is another major actor of the chapel's *synaesthetic space* (Fig. 3.8). Humanity is tangibly present in the rough skin of the walls, the hand-blown lamps, and the hammered wooden furniture. These human traces respond directly to the "eyes of our skin" (Pallasmaa), revealing the organic thickness and familiar veracity of matter, transfigured into *fruit of the earth and work of human hands*. Mystery has found architectural expression in the play of light and darkness, color and texture. It is first of all addressed to our body as a – for once agreeable – 'body scan.' The doors, baptismal font, altar-table, and cross are made of Alaskan yellow cedar wood, hand-carved by local craftspeople. As part of *synaesthetic space*, the rough carving of the wood without polish or embellishment between perceiver and object appeals to the sense of touch and suggests nearness with the organic and the natural. Such a *cosmological* act places human being in direct contact with Creation (Gn 2:8). As part of *conceived space,* its rough, hammered texture subtly unifies different elements in the liturgical space, connecting the *door*, as the main threshold between

FIGURE 3.8 Chapel of St Ignatius, *Seattle, WA* (*Steven Holl, 1997*). *Interior*

38 Ibid., 83.

secular and sacred space; with *Baptism*, the sacramental entrance of the faithful into the Church; with the *Eucharistic center*, heart and source of the local and universal Church's life; and with the *cross*, most explicit denominational and narrative symbol of Christ's Passion and Resurrection in the worship space.[39] "At every turn, the visitor is invited to listen, touch, inhale, see – to worship the world, and yet transcend it, through the senses."[40] It is worth quoting a long, but profoundly revealing passage:

> Architecture like this that liberates does so […] by pointing a direction and then withdrawing, by serving, like the *Spiritual Exercises* themselves, as a guide to personal meditations. In this place we are called to be most truly ourselves and to find ourselves through the love of Christ and the fellowship of community. […] Christianity is never captured in the systematic overview, the aerial perspective, the blueprint and the floorplan, but unfolds always perspectivally, from our point of view. We know that the fundamental thing is a call that vibrates the air but only becomes sound when heard in our hearts – the call to *us* to join the feast of poverty, to kneel at the altar and be this odd transformation, the antidote for evil, the body of Christ, the throats of flesh that sing the incarnate word.
>
> Hearing this call we feel unequal to the task, stretched like canvas to a difficult tension, fragile as glass. But bathed in light we find ways to become the light. Resounding with the toll of the quivering bell we find a heart within that won't stop ringing.[41]

Although the chapel is Roman Catholic in its *Eucharistic space*, its strong *synaesthetic space* allows for people of all worldviews to feel at home.[42] Contemporary church architecture does not have to overwhelm one with a rich symbolic narrative (*conceived space*) but withdraw as architecture in order to liberate *synaesthetic space* for realizing and relishing [*sentir y gustar*] one's own *inner* space of encounter or *Spiritus loci*.[43]

39 The material connection between the two sacraments of Baptism and Eucharist, also seen in the dark mist granite of font, ambo, and pedestal for the altar-table in the *Cathedral of Christ the Light* in Oakland and in the white marble of font, ambo, and altar in *St François de Molitor* in Paris, is a strong symbol of *conceived space*.

40 Judith Dupré, *Churches* (New York: HarperCollins, 2001), 152.

41 Kidder, *Modern,* 25.

42 This chapel brings to light why a phenomenological approach to architecture and Ignatian spirituality belong together, as Steven Holl himself observes. Holl, *Gathering*, 14.

43 "For it is not knowing much, but realizing and relishing things interiorly [el sentir y gustar de las cosas internamente], that contents and satisfies the soul." [SpEx 2]

During the design process of the chapel, Holl delivered some lectures on phenomenology and perception.[44] Holl searches for words that "assume the silent intensities of architecture," even though they "cannot substitute for authentic physical and sensory experience":

> While a cinematic experience of a stone cathedral might draw the observer through and above it, even moving photographically back in time, only the actual building allows the eye to roam freely among inventive details; only the architecture itself offers the tactile sensations of textured stone surfaces and polished wooden pews, the experience of light changing with movement, the smell and resonant sounds of space, the bodily relations of scale and proportion. All these sensations combine within one complex experience, which becomes articulate and specific, though wordless. The building speaks through the silence of perceptual phenomena.[45]

Holl goes as far as to say that perception "is ultimately deficient unless intent is articulated," unless we understand the motivations behind it: "The challenge for architecture is to stimulate both inner and outer perception; to heighten phenomenal experience while simultaneously expressing meaning; and to develop this duality in response to the particularities of site and circumstance." Perception is also thought and understanding.

For Holl, architectural experience is both *fragmented*, for it depends on the moving body, and *enmeshed*, for it participates in the "flesh of the world" (Merleau-Ponty). With "enmeshed experience," Holl understands an intangible event, calqued on Merleau-Ponty's "in-between reality," emerging "from the continuous unfolding of overlapping spaces, materials, and detail."[46] However, "fragmentation is not dispersion but concentration, in which attention is broadened, time is distended."[47] This concentration gives renewed attention to the skin of the "haptic realm."[48]

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44 Holl, *Questions.* I will also refer to Holl's "Anecdotes," published in *Architecture Spoken,* 258–259. The six architects selected out of a group of thirty were asked to give a lecture at Seattle University. Steven Holl delivered his lecture "Questions on Perception." Later, he would recall that his phenomenological approach corresponded with Ignatian spirituality. See Holl, *Gathering*, 14.

45 Holl, *Questions*, 41.

46 Ibid., 45.

47 Ibid., 47.

48 Ibid., 90.

In conclusion, through careful orchestration of colored and projected light, rough surfaces, and simple materials, most of the energy of the design is put in the creation of a perceptual space appealing to the senses. One could say that the building gravitates around what I call *synaesthetic space*, even if this dimension cannot totally be separated from its being *kerygmatic* and *Eucharistic* space. This means that liturgy enters through the door of the senses. Only in the way the liturgy adopts this sensual flow of the building will the experience be wholly holy, and its wholeness come alive. The building does not force one way of doing things, but provides a space for an embodied liturgy. Then architecture is truly what it is meant to be: more than mere shelter, instrument to be played and performed in order to create a truly 'divine liturgy' that sings and dances.

In the same line, the Finnish architect Juhani Pallasmaa describes how architecture "envelops us in the flesh of the world" through *peripheral vision* in contrast with *focused vision* that "pushes us out of the space, making us mere spectators."[49] Pallasmaa critiques the visual hegemony of ocularcentric architecture and pleads for architecture that places us back in a haptic realm:

> The inhumanity of contemporary architecture and cities can be understood as the consequence of the negligence of the body and the senses, and an imbalance in our sensory system. [...] The contradictory opaque transparency of these buildings reflects the gaze back unaffected and unmoved; we are unable to see or imagine life behind these walls.[50]

The alienating flatness of an ocularcentric approach is reinforced by a weakened sense of materiality: natural materials do not hide their aging patina and have a texture and a density through which we become convinced of their veracity.[51] Attentiveness to touch more than vision also allows shadows to engage in a playful *chiaroscuro* "breathing" with light and polish the sharpness

49 "Focused vision confronts us with the world whereas peripheral vision envelops us in the flesh of the world." Pallasmaa, *Eyes*, 10. "Peripheral vision integrates us with space, while focused vision pushes us out of the space, making us mere spectators." Ibid., 13. See also his "An Architecture of the Seven Senses," in Steven Holl, Juhani Pallasmaa, and Alberto Pérez-Gómez, *Questions of Perception: Phenomenology of Architecture* (Tokyo: A + U Publishing, 1994), 27–38.

50 Pallasmaa reacts here against the alienating, flat, and hard surfaces of architectural mirrors of reflective glass. Pallasmaa, *Eyes*, 17–18, 31. See also *Modernity and the Hegemony of Vision,* ed. David Michael Levin (Berkeley, Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 1993). Pallasmaa names Holl and Zumthor as architects favoring haptic plasticity and Meier as ocularcentric architect. Pallasmaa, *Eyes*, 70.

51 Pallasmaa, *Eyes*, 31.

of homogeneous, quantitative, and voyeuristic vision that paralyses all imagination.[52]

Hence, architecture is synaesthetic because "qualities of space, matter and scale are measured equally by the eye, ear, nose, skin, tongue, skeleton and muscle. Architecture strengthens the existential experience, one's sense of being in the world, and this is essentially a strengthened experience of self."[53] Pallasmaa privileges the sense of touch as "the unconscious of vision," interpreting the other senses as "extensions of the sense of touch" or "specializations of the skin," which "reads the texture, weight, density and temperature of matter."[54] Because architecture is made for the human body, it can best be described in terms of verbs rather than nouns: "Architectural space is lived space rather than physical space, and lived space always transcends geometry and measurability."[55]

Similar to Holl, Pallasmaa applies Merleau-Ponty's chiasm between body and world to the experience of architecture: "I lend my emotions and associations to the space and the space lends me its aura, which entices and emancipates my perceptions and thoughts."[56] As a consequence, a "powerful architectural experience silences all external noise; it focuses our attention on our very existence, and as with all art, it makes us aware of our fundamental solitude."[57] At the same time, architecture "emancipates us from the embrace of the present and allows us to experience the slow, healing flow of time."[58] Indeed:

> Architecture is deeply engaged in the metaphysical questions of the self and the world, interiority and exteriority, time and duration, life and death. [...] Architecture is our primary instrument in relating us with

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52 Pallasmaa notes that we close off our distancing sight during overpowering emotional experiences such as listening to music or caressing our loved ones. Ibid., 46. In the next chapter, I refer to the effect of light and shadows during the Easter vigil at *Christ the Light Cathedral* in Oakland.

53 Ibid., 41.

54 Ibid., 42, 56. Because of the synaesthesy of architecture, metaphors involving the more intimate senses of smell and taste are more than mere poetic associations: they point out that the living body as a whole is intimately engaged in the experience. In the section significantly entitled "The Taste of Stone," Pallasmaa evokes examples of 'delicious' architecture and John Ruskin's urge to 'eat' Veronese marble. Ibid., 59–60.

55 Ibid., 63–64.

56 Ibid., 12.

57 Ibid., 52. Rasmussen defined architecture as "the art of petrified silence." Rasmussen, 225.

58 Pallasmaa, *Eyes*, 52.

> space and time, and giving these dimensions a human measure. It domesticates limitless space and endless time to be tolerated, inhabited and understood by humankind.[59]

Therefore, it is the timeless task of architecture "to create embodied and lived existential metaphors that concretize and structure our being in the world [as] the art of reconciliation between ourselves and the world."[60] Such a statement must be countered by pointing to the limits of architecture, but *synaesthetic space* indeed *reveals us to ourselves as embodied beings*. The two case studies have pointed at an embodied experience of the sacred. Architecture is first of all a matter of space and light in addressing the body. This is theologically relevant. In the next part of this chapter, I will search for an adequate terminology to come to terms with this experience. For this, I draw on the thought of some phenomenologists.

Body Scan? Architecture and Phenomenology

> Our contemporary forms of technical reproduction have so deceived us, that when we actually stand before one of the great architectural monuments of human culture for the first time, we are apt to experience a certain disappointment. They do not look as 'painterly' as they seem from the photographic reproductions that are so familiar to us. In fact, this feeling of disappointment only shows that *we still have to go beyond the purely artistic quality of the building considered as an image and actually approach it as architectural art in its own right*. To do that, we have to go up to the building and wander round it, both inside and out. Only in this way can we acquire a sense of what the work holds in store for us and allow it to enhance our feeling for life.
>
> HANS-GEORG GADAMER[61]

The aim of this section is, on the basis of the phenomenological *theotopy* of the case studies, to lay bare the *implicitly* religious dimension of the experience of architecture. Architecture has to be taken seriously for what it is, before claiming that it has a meaning exterior to it. Meaning is not found *beyond* but *within*

59 Ibid., 16–17.

60 Ibid., 71–72.

61 Hans-Georg Gadamer, *The Relevance of the Beautiful* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986 (1977)), 45.

its sensuous depths, and this matters for theology. I call the aesthetic experience of architecture *synaesthetic space*. Its texture heightens the awareness of one's embodied self as embedded within the cosmos. That is why I have named this section "body scan" in reference to the uncomfortable body scans at airports. Architecture at its best indeed 'scans' our bodies, but in a totally different way: by way of *expansion*, it gives space to our bodies, making us aware of being embodied.

How does the discipline of phenomenology shed light upon *synaesthetic space*? I draw on some phenomenologists who have considered aesthetic experience. All of them underline that one appears to oneself in the experience of the phenomenon. Because they have not explicitly written on architecture, the specificity of architectural experience as suggested by the case studies will continuously be in the background of my discussion.

Space. Saturated Atmosphere

> We see the depth, the smoothness, the softness, the hardness of objects; Cézanne even claimed that we see their odor.
>
> MAURICE MERLEAU-PONTY[62]

Both case studies of this chapter pointed already to the following observation: *synaesthetic space* can be understood as 'atmosphere.' Let us briefly explore the fascinating world of phenomenology in order to discover that this basic intuition corresponds to some of the more fundamental categories of five philosophers who have dedicated their work to come to terms with this experience.

Dwelling (*Heidegger*). In spite of his nostalgia for the rural and pagan romanticism of the "fourfold" (humanity, divinity, heaven, and earth), the German philosopher Martin Heidegger (1889–1976) laid the foundation stone of a phenomenology of architecture by drawing building (*bauen*) from dwelling (*buan*) as a way of being and staying (*wuon*).[63] To build is to dwell, to stay concretely with things and to engage bodily with them. Space is not defined *in abstracto* by mathematics (*space as container*) but is encountered concretely by building

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62 Maurice Merleau-Ponty, "Cézanne's Doubt," in *Sense and no-Sense* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1964), 15. [orig. "Le doute de Cézanne," in *Sens et non-sens* (Paris: Nagel, 1948), 15].

63 Martin Heidegger, "Der Ursprung des Kunstwerkes" (1950); "Das Ding" (1950); "Bauen Denken Wohnen" (1951); "...dichterisch wohnet der Mensch..." (1951) in Adam Sharr, *Heidegger for Architects* (London/New York: Routledge, 2007). The quotation is taken from Sharr, 23.

and dwelling (*relational space*). Heidegger's paradigmatic building is a bridge connecting two riverbanks and *defining* them anew by *gathering* their landscapes. By dwelling 'poetically,' human beings incorporate and appropriate the place.[64] *Synaesthetic space* can only be experienced by concrete dwelling.

Flesh (*Merleau-Ponty*). The French phenomenologist Maurice Merleau-Ponty (1908–1961) used the concept of 'flesh' (French: *la chair*) in order to explain the intimate, overlapping encounter (chiasm) between our sensing body and the surrounding world.[65] Flesh is the invisible multisensory depth and density surrounding our body. Hence, *synaesthetic space* is the spatial translation of flesh, in contrast to geometrical space (as container). In contrast to a scientific approach, art (and thus architecture) does not manipulate things but allows dwelling among them. As such, through art one heightens one's

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64 A significant illustration is given in the following description of the American philosopher Alphonso Lingis: "My bed was, the first night, crisp and brittle, foreign; little by little it has become intimate. It has acquired a very decided and very obvious fleshy texture; as I lie enveloped within it, I no longer distinguish where my body leaves off and where an alien surface begins. At first, I had that very vivid awareness of these sheets *touching* me, an alien surface *in contact* with the frontiers of myself. Little by little, this frontier fades, obliterates itself and becomes indefinite. The intimacy of the flesh diffuses throughout the whole bedsheet, finally into the bed itself, and the room also by a sort of contagion. They have become incorporated." Alphonso Lingis, *Before the Visage,* unpublished manuscript (Duquesne University, 1963), 56, quoted in Richard Lang, "The Dwelling Door: Towards a Phenomenology of Transition," in *Dwelling, Place and Environment,* ed. David Seamon and Robert Mugerauer (New York: Columbia University Press, 1989), 201–213, at 203. In contrast, sleeping in somebody else's bedsheets is somehow indecent and even repulsive, which has nothing to do with "something merely accidental" like smells or dirt, because "there is nothing nauseating about sleeping outside, on the bare humus itself." The reason for this repulsion is "the flesh's revolt against what is not of itself; the flesh knows its own." Lingis, 57.

65 Merleau-Ponty's works on art include "Le doute de Cézanne," in *Sens et non-sens* (Paris: Nagel, 1948), 15–44; "Le langage indirect et les voix du silence," in *Signes* (Paris: Gallimard, 1960), 49–104; and *L'Œil et l'Esprit* (Paris: Gallimard, 1964). On his concept of flesh, see also the chapter "L'entrelacs – Le chiasme," in *Le visible et l'invisible* (Paris: Gallimard, 1964), 170–201, and *Phénoménologie de la perception* (Paris: Gallimard, 2009 (1945)), *passim*. See also François Cavallier, *Premières leçons sur l'Œil et l'Esprit de M. Merleau-Ponty* (Paris: PUF, 1998); Françoise Dastur, *Chair et langage: Essais sur Merleau-Ponty* (Fougères: Encre marine, 2001); Serge Valdinoci, *Merleau-Ponty dans l'invisible: L'Œil et l'Esprit au miroir du Visible et l'invisible* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2003); and Jonathan Gilmore, "Between Philosophy and Art," in *The Cambridge Companion to Merleau-Ponty,* ed. Taylor Carman and Mark B.N. Hansen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 291–317. Especially Holl and Pallasmaa draw on Merleau-Ponty's concept of flesh or chiasm.

self-awareness as embodied being. Both case studies of this chapter demonstrate particularly this last point by emphasizing texture and color.[66]

Genius loci (*Norberg-Schulz*). The Danish architect Christian Norberg-Schulz (1926–2000) digged up an antique Roman concept, *genius loci* (spirit of the place), in order to express the fact that some natural places are surprisingly full of "life and character," as if they housed some kind of guardian spirit.[67] Architecture should 'gather' and 'explain' this environmental *genius loci* and make it concrete and tangible by symbolizing, condensing, and complementing it.[68] The built *genius loci* is thus an interpretation of the natural *genius loci*.[69] By gathering and visualizing its *genius loci*, architecture reveals the *site* as a *place* full of meaning and character that enable us to dwell.[70] The distint character (*Stimmung*) of the place allows identification (*Übereinstimmung*), so that one becomes "'friends' with a particular environment."[71]

Whereas *nouns* designate sites and *prepositions* designate spaces, telling *where* one is, characters are explained by using *adjectives*, allowing one to know *how* one is.[72] Hence, in order to condense and visualize the *genius loci*, orientation (*where*) and identification (*how*) are two essential dimensions of the building. Norberg-Schulz discerns three archetypal tendencies of gathering the *genius loci*: romantic, cosmic, and classical. *Romantic* buildings have a wild,

66 Further reading: Raymond Court, *Le voir et la voix: Essai sur les voies esthétiques* (Paris: Cerf, 1997). Court discerns two basic ontological approaches to reality: one based on vision (*voir*), the other on audition (*voix*). He suggests a phenomenology and even a theology of flesh (*chair*, *Leib*, *basar*, *sarx*) based on both dimensions, reproaching both Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty for prioritizing vision alone, missing the rich implications of the call of the other/Other. See also his *La vérité de l'art? La figure et le sacré* (Paris: Ereme, 2003).

67 Christian Norberg-Schulz, *Genius loci: Towards a Phenomenology of Architecture* (London: Academy Editions, 1980) is written as a sequel to *Intentions in Architecture* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1963) and *Existence, Space and Architecture* (London: Praeger, 1971).

68 Norberg-Schulz, *Genius*, 10.

69 "Urban gathering may be understood as an *interpretation* of the local *genius*, in accordance with the values and needs of actual society. In general we may say that *the meanings which are gathered by a place constitute its genius loci*." Ibid., 170. Some paradigmatic cities have a strong urban *genius loci*: Norberg-Schulz discusses Paris, Prague, and Khartoum.

70 "The 'meaning' of any object consists in the relationships to other objects, that is, it consists in what the object 'gathers.' A thing is a thing by virtue of its gathering." Ibid., 166.

71 "Jede Stimmung ist Übereinstimmung." (Every character is identification.) Otto Friedrich Bollnow, *Das Wesen der Stimmungen* (Frankfurt-am-Main: Klostermann, 1956 (1941)), 39, quoted in Norberg-Schulz, *Genius*, 21.

72 Norberg-Schulz, *Genius*, 16.

mysterious, idyllic, and intimate atmosphere and are enclosed *in* the ground (Art Nouveau). *Cosmic* buildings are ordered geometrically and float freely above freely *over* the ground (Villa Savoye). *Classical* buildings stand in-between, combining organic personality with articulate order, standing autonomously *on* the ground (Parthenon).[73]

Following this typology, Le Corbusier's *Notre-Dame-du-Haut* (Fig. 2.3), Zumthor's *Bruder Klaus Kapelle* (Fig. 1.9), Holl's *Chapel of St Ignatius* (Figs. 3.6–3.8), and perhaps Tesar's Donaucity-church (Fig. 5.1) can be characterized as *romantic*, because they seem to be molded out of phenomenal flesh. Meier's *Jubilee Church* (Figs. 2.8 and 2.9), Botta's *Cathedral of the Resurrection* (Figs. 0.1 and 1.6) and Hartman's *Christ the Light Cathedral* (Fig. 4.1) are of the *cosmic* type, conceived out of an 'absolute' order. Moneo's *Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels* (Figs. 4.10–4.12) might be characterized as *classical*, because it combines romantic and cosmic features. As a matter of fact, Norberg-Schulz claims that most buildings are complex entities combining the three archetypal dimensions. In the *Lumen church* (Figs. 1.10, 4.5), the white cone is *cosmic* for its strong vertical transcendence; the worship space around the stained glass window is *classical*; and the café, defined by the sound of conversation and the smell of coffee, might be characterized as *romantic*.

Event (*Marion*). According to the French phenomenologist Jean-Luc Marion (°1946), the givenness (*donation*) of 'saturated phenomena' is the paradigm for understanding the relationship between subject and object in all common phenomena.[74] In the event of givenness, an overpowering and detached subject (ego) is reduced to and defined as a more humble and receptive *adonné*, the one who-is-given-to.[75]

Marion describes the difference between a mere object and an event. Whereas an object is a common phenomenon at our disposition, an event is a

73 Ibid., 179. These archetypes somehow correspond with Debuyst's three (organic, analytical, synthetic).

74 Jean-Luc Marion, *De surcroît: Études sur les phénomènes saturés* (Paris: PUF, Quadrige, 2010 (2001)) Henceforth, DS. [*In Excess: Studies of Saturated Phenomena*, trans. Robyn Horner and Vincent Berraud, Perspectives in Continental Philosophy 27 (New York: Fordham University Press, 2002)]. Henceforth, IE. He describes four types of saturated phenomena: event, idol, flesh, and icon. The world appears saturated as event, the visible as idol, the self as flesh, and the other as icon. See also Mikkel B. Tin, "Saturated Phenomena: From Picture to Revelation in Jean-Luc Marion's Phenomenology," *Filozofia* 65 (2010): 860–876 and Shane Mackinlay, *Interpreting Excess: Jean-Luc Marion, Saturated Phenomena and Hermeneutics* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2010).

75 "The *ego*, deprived of transcendentalizing dignity, must be admitted as it is received, as an *adonné*: the one who is itself received from what it receives." DS 56; IE 45.

'saturated phenomenon' that manifests and gives itself.[76] Marion calls an event 'saturated' because it is an overwhelming reality in which not everything that is given appears. There is an excess in the given. For instance, an empty room and its empty chairs are 'already there,' not as *objects* at our disposition, but as an *event* waiting for our indwelling. The event puts us on stage (*nous met en scène*) by giving itself.[77] Hence, the perceiving subject is 'phenomenalized' in the event.[78] What is more, this return to the self is a criterion for the validity of phenomenological perception.[79] Marion defines *adonné* as "the one who receives *oneself* from what one receives."[80] It is only in the reception of the saturated phenomenon that one becomes aware of oneself as *adonné*. This is not merely passive reception but implies activity. The active function of the *adonné* is to 'phenomenalize' the given (*donné*) by *resisting* it, by being an obstacle to it, a screen onto which the given is revealed (in a photographic sense).[81] The more the perceiver resists (also in the sense of electric resistance), the more both perceiver and perceived are revealed.[82] For instance, admiratively looking at (*regarder, admirer*) a painting is an exercice of resistance (*résister au flux du visible*), in contrast to mere seeing (*voir*), which is not able to dwell and remain in the event of excess.[83] To take this intuition further,

76 "Phenomena show *themselves,* instead of letting them be shown simply as objects." DS 38; IE 31.

77 "We never put into play the event [...] but, itself, at the initiative of its *self*, it produces us (*nous met en scène*) in *giving itself to us*. It produces us (*nous met en scène*) in the scene that opens its givenness." DS 42; IE 34.

78 "They provoque the *ego* to phenomenalize itself according to this unique eventmentality." DS 48; IE 39.

79 "The reduction thus always first reduces the one who operates it – and it is by this recoiling on itself (*retour sur soi*) that the phenomenological validity of each attempt at reduction is measured." DS 58; IE 47.

80 DS 60; IE 48.

81 "L'*adonné* phenomenalizes in receiving the given, precisely because it is an obstacle to it, stops it in blocking it (*l'arrête en lui faisant écran*) and fixes it in centering it (*en le cadrant*). [...] L'*adonné* does not see itself before receiving the impact of the given." DS 61–62; IE 50.

82 "The extent of the phenomenalization depends on the resistance of l'*adonné* to the brutal shock of the given. [...] The greater the resistance to the impact of the given (therefore first of [all] the lived experiences, intuitions), the more the phenomenological light shows *itself*." DS 63; IE 51.

83 DS 73; IE 59. Marion explores the abysmal gap between the saturated phenomena that he called *idol* (a painting) and *icon* (the face of the other) by referring to Rothko's non-denominational *Chapel*, which is full of idols but is without a name (it is non-denominational) and without a face (there is no icon). The limit of the idol is the absence of a name

I suggest that resistance implies the sensuous body. It is only by being implied bodily that one can offer resistance to the given – which a detached gaze cannot do. Because the paradigm of the visible predominates in his reflections, Marion does not explore the corporal density of architecture. Although one commentator critiques "the role of the subject being reduced to purely passive reception,"[84] in my view Marion successfully strikes a balance between object and subject through his concept of *resistance.*

For our concern, synaesthetic space can be understood as a saturated event, which defines the perceiver not as a detached subject but as one who is staged by and within the event. In order to become aware of this, he has to resist actively, that is, engage bodily with the surroundings. The more he resists, the more he becomes aware of synaesthetic space and of himself as embodied being.

Atmosphere (*Böhme*). The German philosopher Gernot Böhme (°1937) points out that architecture, apart from being practical and functional, creates atmospheres (*Atmosphäre*). These can be categorized as warm, cold, comfortable, businesslike, familiar, inviting, oppressive, dark, or light, as if they characterized the physiognomy of the building.[85] Böhme's philosophical project, entitled *neue Ästhetik* (New Aesthetics) is based on atmospheres. Not objects, but atmospheres are the primary 'object' (*Gegenstand*) of perception.[86] This

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and a face, and thus the impossibility to be an icon. I do not gaze (*regarder*) in the face of the other; I respect (*respecter*) this face that calls me. Marion's disappointment suggests the need for sacred spaces with a face and a name. In Baptism, he says, we ourselves are inscribed in the Name: by dwelling in the Name we are named and called: "The Name – it has to be dwelt in without saying it; but by letting it say, name, and call us." (*Le Nom – il faut y habiter sans le dire, mais en s'y laissant nous-mêmes dire, nommer, appeler.*) DS 203; IE 162. Marion ends his book with a reflection on how this (divine) Name could be made present. See especially Chapter 6, "In the Name: How to Avoid Speaking of It" (*Au nom ou comment le taire*), DS 161–203; IE 128–162.

84 Mackinlay, 2, 68, 217.

85 Gernot Böhme, *Atmosphäre: Essays zur neuen Ästhetik* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1995), 97. See also "Atmosphären kirchlicher Räume," in *Sehnsucht nach heiligen Räumen: Eine Messe in der Messe, Berichte und Ergebnisse des 24. Evangelischen Kirchenbautages 2002*, ed. Helge Adolphsen, Andreas Nohr (Darmstadt: 2003), 111–124; republished in *Artheon-Mitteilungen* 24 (Dec 2006): 26–31.

86 Böhme, *Atmosphäre,* 48. Italics original. Atmospheres are not easily perceptible, because they work on the *unconscious*. This, Böhme argues, is the reason why atmospheres are powerful tools for political, economic, cosmetic, and commercial systems. Ibid., 39. Even when atmospheres might be invisible to our consciousness (*Bewußtsein*) they do not remain unperceived for our state of being (*Befindlichkeit*). Böhme, *Atmosphäre*, 97.

has not only the advantage of avoiding subjectivist and objectivist tendencies in aesthetics, but also of including popular art and natural phenomena next to masterpieces.[87]

Böhme builds on and takes distance from the German philosopher Hermann Schmitz's use of the term.[88] For Schmitz (°1928), atmospheres are "objective feelings" (*objektive Gefühle*) that 'float' quasi-autonomously between subject and object. They have the powerful capacity to transform (*umstimmen*) one's current mood (*Stimmung*). Schmitz dislocates atmospheres from both subject and object in such a way that, from the *receptive* side, one takes them in "nearly corporally" (*quasi-leiblich in sich aufnimmt*), and from the *productive* side, little can be done to produce them.

In contrast, Böhme connects atmospheres again with both subject and object: they are "the common reality of the perceiver and the perceived."[89] This implies, from the point of view of the perceiving subject, that atmospheres only exist – or better, only matter – when the perceiver is *bodily present* and experiences the atmosphere in a *synaesthetic* way.[90] From the point of view of the perceived object (in our case: building), Böhme points out that objects are *ecstatic* and *expansive*.[91] Hence, he defines atmospheres as spaces (*Räume*) that are 'tinged' (*tingiert*) through the ecstasies (*Ekstasen*) of things and persons. They indicate that something is really *present*.[92] Atmospheres can thus

87 Although he is critical of an elitist and self-sufficient aesthetization that disapproves of popular art, Böhme interprets the current *aesthetization* of Western culture and the resurgence of *ecology* as propitious for his New Aesthetics, based upon the expansive, *communicative* 'aesthetics' already present in nature and unperceived by the natural sciences. Whereas classical aesthetics privileged the beautiful, taste, and judgment, he proposes to include the serious, the frightening, the powerful, and the religious as well, and to focus on the more vague sensuous experience. For instance, Böhme critiques a semiotic approach that merely *perceives* but cannot *sense* the freshness of beer in an advertisement. Here, he refers to Umberto Eco, *Einführung in die Semiotik* (München: 1972), 201–202.

88 See for instance Hermann Schmitz, *System der Philosophie, III: Der Raum*, especially volumes 1. *Der leibliche Raum* (Bonn: ^{2}1988), 2. *Der Gefühlsraum* (Bonn: ^{2}1981), and 4. *Das Göttliche und der Raum* (Bonn: ^{2}1995); "Atmosphären als ergreifende Mächte," in *Theologisches geschenkt. FS Manfred Josuttis*, ed. Christoph Bizer, Jochen Cornelius-Bundschuh, Hans-Martin Gutmann, 52–58 (Bovenden: 1996).

89 Ibid., 34. Böhme argues that calling an evening cheerful is not less legitimate than calling a leaf green, as both perceptions imply a perceiver.

90 See especially "Synästhesien," in Böhme, *Atmosphäre,* 85–98. Few scholars use the term *synaesthesis* in order to underline the experience of atmospheres.

91 "The shape of something *works* outwards." Ibid., 33. Italics original.

92 Ibid., 33.

be called *objektive Gefühle,* because ecstatic *objects* articulate them as *feelings* of perceivers, who at the same time experience their own *embodied* presence.[93] As a consequence, the architect produces atmospheres not by treating materials as objects but by letting them "step out of their boundaries" (*aus sich heraustreten zu lassen*).[94] Unfortunately, Böhme does not offer concrete criteria to name or discern atmospheres and their different qualities.

In conclusion, the five terms – dwelling, flesh, *genius loci*, event, and atmosphere – clarify my concept of *synaesthetic space*. It is an invisible atmosphere that floats around and in the building and is only perceived by a perceiving body (in this sense it is a 'feeling'). *Synaesthetic space* depends from the 'expansive' quality of the building (in that sense it is 'objective'). Its fundamental characteristic is that one encounters oneself as embodied presence. For instance, the scraped texture of the walls in the *Chapel of St Ignatius* (Fig. 3.8) and the rough texture of the clay wall in the *Chapel of Reconciliation* (Fig. 3.3) define their *ecstasy*, addressing our sense of touch, especially our skin. Similarly, *St Peter* in Wenzenbach introduces us into a deep 'blue' atmosphere (Fig. 3.9). The deep blue defines this places as eschatological heterotopia (*infra*). *Synaesthetic space* places human being within the cosmos as an *embodied* being. Let me take this conclusion a bit further and understand *synaesthetic space* as 'expressed world.'

Light. Expressed World

> Is not aesthetic experience – through which we hope to discover art – the action of art within us, the result of an inspiration parallel to that which grips the artist?
>
> MIKEL DUFRENNE[95]

Atmospheres can be perceived, but what is expressed in them? The French phenomenologist Mikel Dufrenne (1910–1995) also used the term atmosphere in order to explain *aesthetic perception* as the "fulfillment" of a work of art.[96] In

93 Atmospheres "belong to subjects, for they are bodily perceived by people and this perception is at the same time a bodily self-awareness (*ein leibliches Sich-Befinden*) of the subjects in the space." Ibid., 34.

94 Ibid., 34. Nevertheless, one still wonders how this can be put into practice.

95 Mikel Dufrenne, *Phénoménologie de l'expérience esthétique* (Paris: PUF, 1953), 13; *The Phenomenology of Aesthetic Experience*, trans. Edward S. Casey (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1973), lv. Henceforth, PEE, PAE.

96 Further reading: Eugene F. Kaelin, *Art and Existence* (Lewisburg, PA: Bucknell University Press, 1970); Robert R. Magliola, *Phenomenology and Literature* (Lafayette, IN: Purdue

FIGURE 3.9 St Peter, *Wenzenbach, Germany* (*Peter and Christian Brückner, 2005*). *Entrance*

aesthetic perception, the perceiver "performs" aesthetically the work of art in order to reveal its *expressed world* or "atmosphere of a world," which goes unperceived in a purely scientific or utilitarian approach that searches for a *represented world*, that is, meaning *exterior* to the work of art.[97] In contrast to art that reproduces or imitates reality, authentic art imitates what is *inimitable*

University Press, 1977), esp. Part II, "Chapter 3: Mikel Dufrenne," 142–173; Mark Randolph Feezell, "Mikel Dufrenne and the Ontological Question in Art: A Critical Study of 'The Phenomenology of Aesthetic Experience,'" unpublished Ph.D. dissertation (Buffalo, NY: State University, 1977). A contemporary theologian referring to Dufrenne is David Torevell, *Liturgy and the Beauty of the Unknown: Another Place* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), esp. Chapter 6, "The Movement of Aesthetics," 161–182.

97 See Chapter 5, "Objet esthétique et monde," PEE 198–257, esp. 221–257. Casey considered this "one of Dufrenne's most original contributions," PAE xxvii. Dufrenne builds on Ingarden's concept of "represented world." See Roman Ingarden, *Das literarische Kunstwerk* (Tübingen: Niemeyer, [3]1965 (1931)), §31–37. The expressed world is the focus of all arts: "The representational arts also acquire, by means of expression, their highest signfication and the highest unity of the sensuous." PEE 397 (PAE 319).

by "surprising reality in its intimacy" so that "the perceiver participates in this exploration" and looses his impassibility in order to be surprised by, complice of, and lost in the work.[98] Close to Norberg-Schulz's concept of *genius loci* and Böhme's *atmosphere*, Dufrenne's *expressed world* is *expansive,* able to "annex and aestheticize" its environment:

> It is common to an atmosphere to diffuse itself (*C'est le propre d'une atmosphère de se répandre*), not because it is ungraspable, but because it has the positive power of extending itself beyond the particular objects of which it is the quality and of drawing other objects to it in order to disclose itself through them.[99]

Dufrenne's main contribution to a phenomenology of art is to have emphasized the role of the *perceiver* by distinguishing between *work of art* and *aesthetic object*. A work of art becomes an aesthetic object when perceived purily aesthetically, putting aside utilitarian, scientific, and religious meaning. Dufrenne goes as far as to say that one who prays in a church cannot be attentive to its aesthetic qualities.[100] Dufrenne's emphasis on the aesthetic object should not be understood as exclusive but as inclusive. For our purpose, synaesthetic space does not explain all that can be said theologically about a building but certainly deserves its due, because it is theologically relevant *as well* (next to kerygmatic and Eucharistic space, as we will see). Therefore, it is essential to become aware – in synaesthetic space – of the synaesthetic qualities of the building. This is a first and fundamental approach to any building for anyone who wishes to formulate a sound theological reflection. Jumping too quickly to kerygmatic and Eucharistic space would lead to biased conclusions, as we have seen in the former chapter. Religious knowledge could bypass the *expressed world* – and this (although Dufrenne does not make this explicit) matters for theology.[101]

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98 PEE 628 (PAE 514).

99 PEE 239 (PAE 181). Translation altered. For instance, the château of Versailles *represents* the historical power of the *Roi Soleil* but *expresses* "nobility, fervor, majesty, [and] tranquility." The château annexes and aestheticizes its parc. PEE 237 (PAE 180).

100 PEE 169 n2. Even though Dufrenne tends towards a 'pure' aesthetics, he certainly has a point: so many times, after asking them what they thought of a church, people answered me, puzzled: "I wouldn't know. I never thought about it."

101 PEE 171. In contrast to Dufrenne, I would not dissociate so harshly the aesthetic dimension from other dimensions. Especially the case of architecture demonstrates that different dimensions coexist.

All authentic art might be implicitly religious in bespeaking an act of assent "consummated in the work itself," in which the perceiver has to participate.[102] One can participate in the work of art by *performing* it in the same way a piece of music or a play are performed.[103] Hence, every perceiver is a performer and every work of art only exists when performed as aesthetic object.[104] Dufrenne underlines that such performance is *aesthetic*. For our concern, 'performing' a church building is not merely praying or worshiping in it. Dufrenne points to an explicitly aesthetic experience.

Just as all phenomenologists, Dufrenne is at pains to state that the subject does not *constitute* this aesthetic object. In the act of aesthetic perception, the work of art *manifests itself as aesthetic object*. This is no matter of beauty or judgment (as in classical aesthetics) but of awareness and *constatation*.[105] That is why great art expresses despair with felicity: "The aesthetic object should not fail even when it expresses failure."[106] Aesthetic perception is "an act common to perceiver and perceived, [...] an understanding anterior to any logos."[107] Meaning is inherent to perception, and only acknowledged in perception. It then *resonates* within me with a "certain character of urgency or authority" and is *immediately* seized within the sensuous, to which "I answer with my body":

> On the plane of presence, everything is given, nothing is known. Or, if you will, here I know things in the same way that they know me. [...] On this plane, signification is experienced by the body in its connivance with the world. The object as seen says something, just as a certain heaviness in the air indicates a tempest to the sailor, or a strident intonation expresses anger. However, on the one hand, the object says these things by itself without suggesting the representation of anything else. On the other hand, the object says them to my body without eliciting, through some representation, an act of intelligence other than that of the body.[108]

102 PEE 402 n1.

103 PEE 45.

104 PEE 45–46.

105 "Basically, it is not we who decide what is beautiful. The object itself decides, and it does so by manifesting itself. The aesthetic judgment is passed from within the object rather than within us. We do not define the beautiful, we ascertain (*constate*) what the object is. [...] Our preferences are not constitutive of aesthetic experience but only add a personal note to it." PEE 22–23 (PAE lxii–lxiii). Dufrenne does not reject beauty as an aesthetic category but as the *criterion* for authentic art.

106 PEE 427 (PAE 340). How can the tragic find a place in church architecture?

107 PEE 4–5.

108 PEE 424–425 (PAE 338–339).

The significance of the aesthetic object is understood not by decoding but by 'living it' (*en la vivant*).[109] This can only be done by 'corporeal intellection,' which provokes Dufrenne to say: "The body itself is light."[110] Contrary to an analytical, detached gaze, the body unifies the multisensory experience in felicitous, innocent *familiarity* with the aesthetic object.[111] At the same time, the perceiver is in "corporeal complicity" with the artist.[112] "Inspiration proceeds from the body" as "the spontaneity of enthusiasm (*élan*), the air of sincerity, freshness, and joy" in both artist and performer (that is, the perceiver). Works of art without inspiration are fundamentally boring because "the artist has failed to establish with his body the most valuable of alliances."[113] The virtue of the aesthetic object can be measured according to its power to 'seduce' the body.[114]

The body is attentive to what is *expressed*, not what is *represented* by the aesthetic object. The *expressed world* is found within the sensuous, whereas the *represented world* separates from the sensuous.[115] On subject matter in architecture, Dufrenne observes, referring to Valéry:

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109 PEE 422.

110 PEE 658.

111 "The aesthetic object is above all the apotheosis of the sensuous, and all its meaning is given in the sensuous. [...] The unity of its expression can be grasped only if the diversity of the sensuous is first gathered together in a *sensorium commune*." PEE 426 (PAE 339). "Through our body, we are on an even level with the object, though without fully realizing it. We acquire a familiarity with the object which no act of thought can supplant and which is indispensable for all knowledge by acquaintance (*connaissance*)." PEE 436 (PAE 348).

112 PEE 427–428 (PAE 340–341). Dufrenne explains why the aesthetic object takes us back to innocence: "This is in part due to the fact that this experience implies leisure, transporting us into a world where all is play and where that which is represented is unreal. But it is also due to the fact that aesthetic experience helps us to realize an accord with the object which stops short of discords and demands, allowing us to renew with the world a pact that evokes a golden age." PEE 426 (PAE 339).

113 PEE 427–428 (PAE 340–341).

114 "The virtue of the aesthetic object is largely measured by its ability to seduce the body." PEE 426 (PAE 339) However, Dufrenne warns against an excess of corporal eloquence, when the work absorbs the body or shouts too loud, because the work does not exist for the body alone: "The great works do not make any considerable advances toward, or concessions to, the body." PEE 429 (PAE 342).

115 "Art signifies primarily because it is expressive. [...] Expression appears more adequately the more adequately the sensuous appears. Art can express only by virtue of the sensuous and according to an operation which transforms brute sensuousness into aesthetic sensuousness." PEE 187 (PAE 137–138).

> The subject of a temple or palace is above all the temple or palace itself, whose idea is set forth and exalted by the work. The work is its own subject. And it is all the more profoundly so when it sings – then the subject is melody, that is, expression.[116]

An ordinary stone appears as stone, as thing. In aesthetic perception, this stone should not discard or hide its stoneness, but appear as stone in order to appear as aesthetic object. The material (*matériau*) becomes matter (*matière*) by displaying its sensuous materiality.[117] According to Dufrenne, the more matter and material can be distinguished, the more the aesthetic object appears. That is why he privileges music. Where matter and material are not distinguishable, as in architecture and sculpture, the tendency would be to move immediately to what is *represented* (especially in so-called 'religious art') – this would be an "aesthetic heresy."[118] Nevertheless, what Dufrenne calls a disadvantage for architecture is in my view its greatest opportunity. Architecture is more expressive the more sensuous matter is accentuated, as in the *Chapel of Reconciliation* and the *Chapel of St Ignatius.* In architecture, matter only comes to the fore as matter when its materiality, its 'thingness' is accentuated.

Through aesthetic perception, an *expressed world* brings to light a new quality of things, in contrast to the flattening of the represented world. Whereas a

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116 PEE 397 (PAE 319).

117 "Stone must reveal itself as stone. Whatever reveals itself in this way constitutes the genuine matter (*matière*) of the aesthetic object. […] Ultimately these materials (*matériau*) become aesthetic by advertising themselves instead of keeping themselves hidden, that is, by displaying all of their sensuous richness." PEE 379 (PAE 303).

118 PEE 380 (PAE 304). Dufrenne's relationship with architecture is problematic. He seems to privilege a visual paradigm when calling sculpture a "drawing in space" and reducing architecture to geometry in need of ornament to be art. It is only these geometrical qualities that he acknowledges in contemporary architecture: "Those architects who design in concrete (*Les architectures du béton*) have taught us to enjoy empty space or a large clear surface as much as the antiquated grace of the rococo." To my knowledge, this is the only reference to contemporary (1950s!) architecture in Dufrenne's oeuvre. All his other references to architecture seem to have only historical monuments in mind, where the geometrical qualities play the humble role of a *basso continuo* in the splendid sensuous orchestration of light, stone, and stained glass: "Geometrical qualities must be enveloped and hidden in the work of art, or else only an abstract beauty which is not yet genuine beauty will be exhibited. A cathedral is beautiful because each perspectival view of it shatters and overturns symmetries and regularities and because the light diffused through the stained-glass windows makes the stone sing – in short, it is beautiful because the geometrical qualities of the building are no more than a *basso continuo* in the orchestration of the spectacle." PEE 381–382 (PAE 304–305).

represented world imitates the world, an expressed world *celebrates* the world by *competing* with it and *completing* it.[119] Dufrenne calls the expressed a 'world' because it forms a cohesive unity[120] and it has dimensions that challenge measurement: not in the sense that there is always more to be measured, but because there is not yet anything to be measured. The *expressed world* is like the dawn in which all things are revealed.[121] The expressed world relates to the represented world as an adjective to a noun and as the soul to the body:

> An adjective can found a substantive, creating an object by means of the expression which the adjective confers on the substantive – unless the substantive, poetically employed, contains its own adjective in the way that a sound vibrates with its harmonic overtones. The expressed thus confirms the represented in its objective being. The expressed founds the represented while at the same time being founded on it. In short, the expressed world is like the soul of the represented world, which is, as it were, its body. The relationship which unites them renders them inseparable, and it is together that they constitute the world of the aesthetic object – a world through which this object gains depth.[122]

The expressed world is "the blossoming (*épanouissement*) of the represented to the dimensions of a world."[123] Obviously, the nonrepresentational arts (Dufrenne privileged music) provide direct access to the expressed.[124]

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119 "When the authentic artist draws his inspiration from the real, he does so in order to measure himself against it and to remake it. Even when he celebrates the Creation he competes with it or, like Claudel, at least does not hide the fact that he collaborates with and completes it." PEE 221 (PAE 167).

120 "If the internal unity is missing, there is no longer any expressiveness (*expression*). They are only represented objects, which may be interesting or tedious but which are so diverse that they no longer form a world." PEE 238 (PAE 180).

121 PEE 240.

122 PEE 248 (PAE 189).

123 "The expressed world is not another world but the expansion (*épanouissement*) of represented objects to the dimensions of a world." PEE 245 (PAE 186). "The expressed has primacy [in the sense that it] transfigures the represented and confers on it a meaning through which it becomes inexhaustible." PEE 246 (PAE 188).

124 "In the nonrepresentational arts, the work is expressive through the form of the sensuous. [...] Expression naturally solicits representation as a complement, yet expression is able to do without representation." PEE 249 (PAE 187).

In conclusion, Dufrenne's concept of *aesthetic object* makes us aware of the *expressed world* of works of art. I do not follow him in his tendency to privilege a 'pure' aesthetics,[125] but adopt his plea for an 'aesthetic moment' in the consideration of works of art – in my case, church buildings. I have called this moment (or rather, dimension) *synaesthetic space*. Dufrenne also points out the synaesthesy or multi-sensory aspect of this experience, and especially the importance of 'corporal intellection' of the sensuous. Furthermore, his distinction between expressed and represented world clarifies my concept of synaesthetic space as dawn, in which all things are revealed in their sensuousness. This is a matter of awareness and constatation: becoming aware of the synaesthetic space of a building is theologically relevant – and already a form of prayer. For instance, to be caught into the sunlit forest of *Christ the Light Cathedral* is an unforgettable experience, which certainly appeals to memory and imagination (Fig. 3.10).

FIGURE 3.10 Christ the Light Cathedral, *Oakland, CA* (*Craig Hartman, 2008*). *Interior*

125 Although his translator and commentator Casey benevolently argues that Dufrenne never made this tendency explicit, he agrees that it remains one of the unresolved questions of Dufrenne's theory, especially of this book. See PAE xxv–xxxvi.

Spiritus Loci as Expansion for the Body: Space and Light

> No longer is it a matter of speaking about space and light,
> but of making space and light, which are *there*, speak to us.
> MAURICE MERLEAU-PONTY[126]

The body does not *speak about* space and light. The body 'dwells' (Heidegger) in an expansive 'atmosphere' (Böhme) of space and light. The aim of this chapter has been to assert that church architecture – and its Mystery – is first of all approached by the body. I have called *synaesthetic space* this dimension of a building that addresses the body. Two case studies and a hand-full of phenomenologists have allowed highlighting the importance of this dimension, which is often overlooked. An important conclusion is that synaesthetic space reveals our embodied self. The more we become aware of synaesthetic space, the more we become aware of ourselves as embodied beings. And this is theologically relevant. The body understands space and light – in 'corporal intellection' (Dufrenne). Synaesthetic space makes us aware of the *Spiritus loci* by its intimate influence on the body, not only bringing the body closer to the *world*, in particular to its materiality, but moreover to the experience of *oneself as embodied creature*. That is the humbling experience of architecture, and a theological dimension of all authentic architecture that anybody who *approaches* a church must be aware of – and *resist* (Marion) in order to experience it. Hence, the *genius loci* is a way for the *Spiritus loci* to remain anonymous.

At this stage, it does not matter yet whether we are discussing churches or not – many buildings are able to reveal a sacred character or saturated atmosphere, depending on their treatment of matter, texture, and light. As a matter of fact, many recent collections on sacred architecture include stimulating reflections on (secular) memorials. At this stage, the 'religiosity' of buildings does not yet depend on images and symbols, but on the saturation of their 'flesh' (Merleau-Ponty). The richer in this respect, the more 'sacred' they are. The buildings that least engage the synaesthesy of the body will be the most 'profane' in this sense. In Valéry's metaphor, being mute or only speaking faintly, they might be just utilitarian or functional buildings, but of a platitude in which it is difficult to engage or to identify with. The atmosphere of mystery

126 "Il ne s'agit plus de parler de l'espace et de la lumière, mais de faire parler l'espace et la lumière qui sont là." Merleau-Ponty, *OEil*, 59. [*The Merleau-Ponty Aesthetics Reader: Philosophy and Painting*, ed. Galen A. Johnson (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1993), 138.]

can be enhanced by the contrasting interplay of darkness and light, the plasticity of forms, and the texture of materials. In Norberg-Schulz's categorization, such buildings enhance their 'romantic' dimension over the 'cosmic' and 'classical' dimensions. The *Chapel of reconciliation* (Figs. 3.2–3.5), the *Chapel of St Ignatius* (Figs. 3.6–3.8), the *Autobahnkirche Siegerland* (Fig. 2.13), and the *Bruder Klaus Kapelle* (Fig. 1.9) have proven, just as *Notre-Dame-du-Haut* (Fig. 2.3), to rank high in a hierarchy of this kind. They create the right atmosphere for an encounter with the divine. In other words, they reveal a primary dimension of the *Spiritus loci* in relation to the theological doctrines of Creation and Incarnation, by bringing the perceivers back to their felicitous *embodied* whole *embedded* within creation.

Hence, I conclude the first part of my method, in which I treated Lefebvre's *perceived space* as *synaesthetic*, drawing on phenomenology. Theologically relevant is the fact that the *Spiritus loci* does not leave body and matter aside, but engages with them as expansive spaciousness in order to reveal the divine – still an 'anonymous' transcendent Mystery, but whose Name and Face will be revealed in *kerygmatic* and *Eucharistic space*. In the next chapter, I will draw on hermeneutics in order to discern *conceived space* as kerygmatic, and *enter* more deeply into the Mystery. Image and word will be the focus of this spatial experience of architecture called *kerygmatic* and addressed to the mind.

FIGURE 4.1 Christ the Light Cathedral*, Oakland, CA* (*Craig Hartman, 2008*). Priestly ordination on Saturday October 29, 2011. *Liturgy of the Word*

CHAPTER 4

Kerygmatic Space: Word and Image

Entering a Church – Entering the Mystery

Through the transformative power of the Holy Spirit, matter becomes the means through which the realities of heaven are mediated sacramentally to us just as they were in the Incarnation itself.

DENIS R. MCNAMARA, *Catholic Church Architecture* (2009), 71–72

Some people have a difficult time interpreting modern looking churches because they do not look like what they picture in their minds. They are more comfortable with familiar forms. [...] If architectural archetypes are those that somehow can transport us into the other worldly zone where we meet with God, if these modalities are often incorporated in architectural forms by more astute designers, how then does one avoid cliché? It seems we cannot. The repeated use of verticality, harmony, lintels, focal points, circular motifs, and light can be criticized as clichés for sure. What can be avoided is the intentional and nostalgic use of unsurprising retro-architectural styles that will not (cannot) transport congregations anywhere else other than to the past and without any reference to current realities. They might even blur visions for tomorrow. [...] Could it be, then, that resorting to clichés devoid of archetypal imagination is less likely to help congregations collectively tap into the experience of the sacred?

RICHARD S. VOSKO, *Archetypes and Clichés* (2011), 21, 31–32

Entering into a church is a metaphor for entering into a shared world of symbolic narratives and meanings, somewhat like entering into a story and discovering the richness and internal coherence of its structure. The symbolic associations of a church's structure, furnishings, and decoration evoke a sense of the sacred, as its aesthetic qualities elicit a sense of the holy.

RICHARD KIECKHEFER, *Theology in Stone* (2004), 135.

Interpreting Symbols that Mediate Meaning

Because Christ is God's *Logos* and *Eikon* in person, words and images of God are possible. [...] Pictures allow us to relate to the person of Christ

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> (or to life 'in' Christ) in ways that go beyond oral and written transmissions of the message about him and his meaning.
>
> RICHARD VILADESAU[1]

Entering a church is entering a kerygmatic 'text' of word and image. What does the building proclaim? How does it proclaim the Gospel? Everything in a church is a sign or representation of the Mystery that one is about to enter. In mediating meaning, every image 'speaks'. This does not imply that images can be translated into words, or that their form of communication can be explained by linguistics or semiotics.[2] Whereas *synaesthetic space* is the anonymous space of the Spirit, *kerygmatic space* is the space where Christ is proclaimed as Word and Image (Name and Face) of the invisible God. The American art historian Robin Jensen spoke of a "kind of hypostatic union" between logos and icon: one needs the other in order for Christian meaning to appear.[3] In Oakland Cathedral, words are used as subtitles and footnotes: the building becomes text.[4] What I call *kerygmatic space* is modeled on Lefebvre's *conceived space*. Whereas *perceived space* considers the *spatial practice* of one's body in a place, and *lived space* is its collection of *spaces of representation* for communitarian imagination, *conceived space* gathers the mental *representations of space* evoked by the place. What are the 'representations of space' at work in contemporary church architecture? Which images introduce us into the Mystery by

1 Richard Viladesau, *Theological Aesthetics: God in Imagination, Beauty, and Art* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 170. His conclusion posits a permanent priority of the poetic and symbolic over the conceptual. Ibid., 209.

2 Hence, attempts to develop architectural linguistics and semiotics, such as essays by Daniel Preziosi and Gerard Lukken, are insufficient to give an account of *kerygmatic space*. See the bibliography.

3 Robin Margaret Jensen, *Understanding Early Christian Art* (New York: Routledge, 2000), 181. Since the early Church, art is able to crystallize certain points of theological doctrine in complex and multilayered symbols that speak directly and clearly to the simplest believer. The first Christian images are found as well-preserved frescos in the *Catacombs of St Callistus* along the Via Appia Antica in Rome. The number of First Testament narratives is striking: Adam and Eve, Noah, Jonah, Moses striking the rock, Abraham sacrificing Isaac, Daniel among the lions. Faithful to biblical and patristic accounts, these images were understood in a Christian and eschatological key, and often refer to Baptism as rebirth to life and Eucharist as heavenly banquet. Jensen 62–93. The mood of the depictions is strangely serene, as the renowned French historian Émile Mâle observed: "In those tragic years when the blood of the martyrs was flowing, Christian art expressed nothing but peace." Émile Mâle, *Early Churches of Rome* (London: Ernest Benn, 1960), 24. See also Aidan Nichols, *The Art of God Incarnate: Theology and Image in Christian Tradition* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1981).

4 It is a long tradition for churches to include Biblical inscriptions.

addressing the mind? What makes a sacred place Christian, apart from its synaesthesic qualities and liturgical function? How does a church speak about "what people are in the sight of God" (Rahner)? I suggest recognizing three types among its spatial representations, three types that are essential for a contemporary church to be kerygmatic.

Firstly, the overall *shape* of the building is kerygmatic in evoking natural, Biblical, or anthropological archetypes as ship (*Sankt Peter* in Wenzenbach (Fig. 4.2), *St Prokop* in Prague (Fig. 1.5), or the *Chapel of the Brethren* in Cernosice (Fig. 2.11)), tent (*Christ the Light* in Oakland (Fig. 0.2)), tower (*Cathedral of the Resurrection* in Évry (Fig. 0.1) and *St Theodor* in Köln-Vingst (Fig. 1.7)), house (*Pilgrim chapel* in Westvleteren (Fig. 3.1) and *Chapel* in Oberrealta), shed (*Chapel of Reconciliation* in Berlin (Fig. 3.2)), grotto (*Bruder Klaus Kapelle* in Mechernich (Fig. 1.9)), fairy castle or pagoda (*St Gregory of Nyssa* in San Francisco (Fig. 5.3)), treasure chest (*Notre-Dame de l'Arche de l'Alliance* in Paris (Figs. 4.15 and 4.16)), oasis (the complex of the Roman Catholic *Sankt Florian* and the Protestant *Sophienkirche* in München-Riem), egg (*Dominican chapel* in Louvain-la-Neuve (Fig. 4.3)), beehive (*San Paolo* in Foligno (Fig. 1.4)), bottles in a box (*Chapel of St Ignatius* in Seattle (Fig. 3.6)), crown (*Christ the Light* in Oakland (Fig. 0.2)), or even a church (!) (*Autobahnkirche Siegerland* in Wilnsdorf (Figs. 2.12 and 2.13)). These shapes are often ecclesiological statements about the protective, safe, solid, inspirational, provocative, prophetic, imaginative, on the move, marginal, otherworldly, nourishing, restorative, rekindling, and/or contemporary place of the Church within the world. Size plays an essential role. Recent churches often opt for smallness and marginality (such as Tesar's church in Vienna-Donaucity (Fig. 5.1)), although others, like Botta's cathedral at Évry (Fig. 0.1), are proudly monumental in aiming to be a suburban landmark and a symbolic reference point.

Secondly, spatial representations of *conceived space* include particular *iconography* (cross, crucifix, painting, fresco, tapestry, statue, way of the cross, etc.) that creates devotional centers in overlap with liturgical centers of *lived space* (altar-table, ambo, baptistery).

Finally, *sacred emptiness* is an apophatic symbol of transcendence inherited from twentieth century Modernist minimalism and is opposed to mere emptiness. Paradigmatic in this sense was Schwarz's *Fronleichnamskirche* (1930) (Fig. 2.1). Such 'clean' emptiness with low synaesthetic qualities (materials without texture or depth, reduced to 'pure' surfaces of immaculate whiteness and polished marble) is meant to be apophatic doxology but supposes a strong *Eucharistic space*. Sacred emptiness begins to 'sing' when performed in the right way. On the one hand, in the case of a *monastic* community that favors minimalism in their relationship to the divine, such as in Novy Dvur, sacred

FIGURE 4.2 St Peter*, Wenzenbach, Germany* (*Peter and Christian Brückner, 2005*). *Exterior*

emptiness can therefore become a poignant symbol of the Mystery. On the other hand, sacred emptiness as the purest of *conceived spaces* places a heavy burden on an average *parish* community. The issue at hand is that minimalism can be understood as the purest symbol of transcendence (*sacred emptiness*) or as the most common form of mere emptiness. I suggest that the answer to this issue lies in the common liturgical ethos or *lived space* of a particular worshiping community. When a community treats emptiness well, it becomes a symbol of transcendence, of 'not-emptiness', of filled or inhabited emptiness. And who else is living there than the Spirit of the Christian God? When a community treats a place well, it becomes the *locus* of a *Spiritus loci*. Therefore, *conceived space* and *lived space* should not be disconnected. Is it then only action that makes a place sacred, as Susan White argued? The intention of my whole book is to lay bare the interconnection between three dimensions of space. Action plays an essential role, as well as the synaesthetic and kerygmatic dimensions of space. For instance, the emptiness in *Herz Jesu* in Völklingen is not sacred enough for the community to appropriate it by action alone. This case study is fitting to discuss the issue when emptiness is a symbol for the sacred. I suggest that three features are essential: leeway, orientation, and inaccessibility.

FIGURE 4.3 Dominican Chapel, *Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium* (AGDA (*Benoît Gillon, Géry Despret, 2010*). *Exterior*

First, emptiness must be breathing space, *leeway* to play. One has to experience *spaciousness* instead of feeling confined and limited. This is the *synaesthetic* dimension of emptiness, addressing our body. The whole space should not be filled with furniture in order to evoke transcendence. For instance, in *St Paulus*

in Brussels (Fig. 5.10), spacious emptiness is at the heart of the worshiping community, as the apophatic throne of God. In *St Peter Canisius* in Berlin, one sandstone block has been cut in two: as such, the interior altar-table (Fig. 2.5) is connected with the exterior altar-table in the 'leeway space' outside, as the materialization of a deeper, invisible, transcendent dimension (Fig. 4.4).

Second, emptiness must be directional, provide *orientation*. In order to mediate meaning, emptiness must point towards or lead into the Mystery. This is the *kerygmatic* dimension of emptiness, addressing our mind. For instance, Ando's *Church of the Light* masterfully does so, by cutting out a cross as meaningful emptiness in a plain wall. Emptiness is here aperture, window with a direction, focusing without naming the goal. The only name that is (subtly) provided here is the cross-shape of the window, subtitling this anonymous *Spiritus loci* as Christian, but in a gentle way, without imposing doctrine. In the *Lumen church* in London, the *Ray of light*, totally empty, points upwards, and becomes as such sacred emptiness (Fig. 4.5).

Third, when emptiness is physically but not visually *inaccessible*, it creates a healthy tension and becomes a vacant throne for the divine Majesty. Such

FIGURE 4.4 St Peter Canisius*, Berlin, Germany* (*Heike Büttner, Claus Neumann, George Braun, 2002*)*. Leeway*

FIGURE 4.5 Lumen church*, London, UK* (*Theis and Kahn, 2008*). Ray of light, inside

iconoclasm is at the heart of Christian iconography since its beginning.[5] This characteristic of inaccessible emptiness – or rather vacancy – translates the

5 François Boespflug, *Dieu et ses images: Une histoire de l'Éternel dans l'art* (Montrouge: Bayard, 2008), 90–91, argues that a 'prepared' throne (*hetimasia*<Gr. *étoimazô*, to prepare) as divine

traditional understanding of the sacred as a place *set apart* from the profane (Eliade). This is the *Eucharistic* dimension of emptiness, which addresses our eschatological imagination. For instance, in *St Peter Canisius* in Berlin (Fig. 4.4), emptiness is the materialized *heterotopia* of our deepest desire. The central emptiness in *St Paulus* (Fig. 5.10) becomes inaccessible and thus sacred because of the loaded tension of its location: all seating is oriented towards this empty center, which gathers all gazes.

These three characteristics of emptiness cannot be found in the church in Völklingen (Fig. 4.6), and this lays a heavy burden upon the community. There is no directionality in this space, centered upon the altar-table, but not beyond. Its emptiness is functional, accessible to all. In contrast to *St Paulus*, such accessible emptiness is not loaded with sacred character due to the spatial configuration. The small gap between the glass wall and the steel wall behind the altar-table is too small to provide an eschatological tension between here (*already*) and there (*not yet*) as in Ando's *Church on the Water*, the Sirens' chapel in Otaniemi, and *St François de Molitor* (Figs. 5.6 and 5.7). Nostalgically, some of the parishioners refer to the sacredness of the former church, which was perhaps outdated, but at least there was a dimension of transcendence. Actually, a shrine with statue of the Virgin from the former church is perhaps (also due to emotional bond with the older church) the most important devotional center in the space outside of Eucharistic gatherings.

Are the three types of spatial representations (shape, iconography, emptiness) different from the 'architecture of immanence' of the twentieth century that uses Modernist minimalism in order to create *domus ecclesiae*? Do they introduce us into the Mystery by speaking and singing to one's mind in words and images? Contemporary churches are often critiqued for their eccentric shapes that do not look like churches – remember the 'spilled coffee cup' (see p. 2) – and for their iconographic minimalism, as if they were mere utilitarian assembly halls. Many recent churches unfortunately still display this original sin of the last century. For instance, more than being kerygmatic or sacramental events, the Roman Catholic parish churches in Völklingen (Fig. 4.6) and Steyr (Fig. 4.7) have a tendency to be mere containers for liturgical action and for devotional objects that are not born out of and do not relate to the architecture (*domus ecclesiae*). They are still Modernist, displaying clear rectangular, geometric shapes of a Miesian purism and clean minimalism without kerygmatic intention. They are in danger of becoming what Lefebvre abhorred as

symbol was rather vacant than empty, as a 'symbol of absence' out of a promise of presence. The first known *hetimasia* dates from 360, and is a bronze door relief in the Hagia Sophia. Famous is the 6th-century mosaic of a *hetimasia* with *crux gemmata*, cushion, and cloth in Ravenna.

FIGURE 4.6 Herz Jesu, *Völklingen-Ludweiler, Germany* (*Lamott Architekten, 2001*)

mental or abstract space – empty containers, but no space that introduces us into the Mystery (thus without a *Spiritus loci*).[6] Others, however, can rightly be

6 I have only critiqued the aforementioned churches in Völklingen and Steyr from the point of view of *kerygmatic space*. The former can also be critiqued from the point of view of

FIGURE 4.7 St Franziskus, *Steyr, Austria* (*Riepl Riepl, 2001*)

called kerygmatic 'victories of the spirit' because the words and images they communicate are about God's *Logos* and *Eikon* in person. These churches not only sing about an anonymous *Spiritus loci*, but one who reveals a Face and a Name – Christ. *Kerygmatic space* cannot and should not be dislocated from *synaesthetic* and *Eucharistic space*, because body, mind, and eschatological imagination work together in approaching, entering, and appropriating the Mystery.

When *conceived space* is overemphasized, born out of an abstract idea of the architect's mind, the church becomes isolated from synaesthetic qualities and liturgical function. This does not mean that these churches are neither synaesthetic nor Eucharistic, but that their primary intention of following an architectural form makes these dimensions secondary. We might readily refer here to all Botta's churches (Fig. 0.1), Meier's *Jubilee Church* (Figs. 2.8 and 2.9), and

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synaesthetic space, but the latter creates a honorable body-experience that "heightens our awareness" (Holl). As *Eucharistic space* however, both are splendid *domus ecclesiae* in Schwarzian *open ring* (see below), and as such 'victories of spirit' for parish communities in our time. Yet, hard and cold materials temper this victory seriously in Völklingen, which demonstrates the importance of the body and the interrelation between the three dimensions.

Hartman's *Christ the Light* (Fig. 0.2) in overemphasizing *conceived space*. This type of architectural approach was already critiqued by Peter Hammond in 1960.[7]

As announced in the former chapter, with the help of hermeneutics I would like to explore in this chapter the fundamental distinction between *representation* (sign) and *expression* or (*re-*)*presentation* (symbol) in the case of contemporary church architecture. Whereas in their appeal for *representational decoration*, Roman Catholic Traditionalists seem to understand architecture as 'decorated shed' and thus abhor emptiness as sinful and incapable of communicating transcendence, they overlook the *ornamental expressivity* of architecture, even of sacred emptiness.

As the main case studies to examine *kerygmatic space*, I have chosen cathedrals, because more than chapels and parish or monastic churches, they play an important role in making Christian identity manifest in the midst of the secular city. Whereas chapels today represent tiny experiments of transcendence that may succeed or fail, cathedrals might be seen at the opposite side of the spectrum in Christian sacred spaces. They have to respond to a far more complex brief and, by their scale, are in danger of monumentality. Both Botta and Moneo have expressed their initial apprehension to build a cathedral.[8]

Word. Cathedral of Christ the Light, *Oakland* (*2008*)

> In my early life I wished to become an architect and only in my late teens the other desire, to become a philosophical theologian, was victorious. I decided to build in concepts and propositions instead of stone, iron, and glass. But building remains my passion, in clay and in thought, and as the relation of the medieval cathedrals to the scholastic systems shows,

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7 Peter Hammond, *Liturgy and Architecture* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1962), 82. This is also why I do not discuss the "esoteric and pedantic" (Rhowbotham) proportional method from the "modern primitive" (Padovan) Dom Hans van der Laan OSB, even though he was one of the few to engage in the theological specificities of architecture, in contrast with other forms of art. "His point of departure was not real building but rather the concept behind it. […] He claimed to have unearthed the unique principles of architecture, valid in all times and places." Michel Remery, *Mystery and Matter: On the Relationship between Liturgy and Architecture in the Thought of Dom Hans van der Laan OSB* (*1904–1991*), Studies in Religion and the Arts (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2011), 272–273.

8 Judith Dupré, "Introductory Interview with Mario Botta," in *Churches* (New York: HarperCollins, 2001), 8–17, at 14. José Rafael Moneo, "Architecture as a Vehicle for Religious Experience: The Los Angeles Cathedral," in *Constructing the Ineffable: Contemporary Sacred Architecture,* ed. Karla Cavarra Britton (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2010), 158–169, at 159.

> the two ways of building are not so far from each other. Both express an attitude to the meaning of life as a whole.
>
> PAUL TILLICH[9]

When, in 1965, Tillich noticed his passion for building in architecture and in theology, this one-off comment may indeed be, as Dudley suggests, mere politeness addressed to architects, confirmed by some of Tillich's own comments of his lack of architectural expertise.[10] Nonetheless, it is noteworthy that he relates this passion not so much to their systematic order, but to the fact that both "express an attitude to the meaning of life as a whole."[11] Can contemporary church architecture communicate our ultimate concern (and thus be *theotopy*)? In 1967, the architectural theorist Sigfried Giedion understood contemporary architecture as "the interpretation of a way of life valid for our period."[12] How does Oakland Cathedral interpret contemporary life? Drawing on the etymology of *ethos* as way of life, the American architectural historian Karsten Harries calls this hermeneutic dimension the 'ethical' function of architecture.[13] How is Oakland Cathedral more than a "decorated shed" – or rather, scandalmongers would say, an undecorated one? Which theological *ethos* does it embody? How does it speak about "what people are in the sight of God"?[14] More than being merely a functional "praying machine,"[15] this glass tent proclaims Christian identity within a contemporary city. Is it *theonomous* in laying bare the "*directedness of the self-creation of life* under the dimension of the Spirit toward the ultimate in being and

9 Paul Tillich, "Honesty and Consecration in Art and Architecture," in *On Art and Architecture*, ed. John Dillenberger (New York: Crossroad, 1987), 221–228, at 221. Henceforth, OAA.

10 Martin Dudley, "Honesty and Consecration: Paul Tillich's Criteria for a Religious Architecture," in *The Church and the Arts*, ed. Diana Wood, Studies in Church History 28 (Oxford: Blackwell, ^{2}1995), 515–522, 521. See Paul Tillich, "Theology and Architecture," OAA, 188–198, at 188 and 191.

11 OAA 221.

12 Sigfried Giedion, *Space, Time and Architecture*, 5th ed. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1974), xxxiii.

13 Karsten Harries, *The Ethical Function of Architecture* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1998).

14 Karl Rahner, "Art against the Horizon of Theology and Piety," in *Theological Investigations*, vol. XXIII, trans. J. Donceel and H.M. Riley: (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1992) 162–168, at 163.

15 Paraphrasing Le Corbusier's well-known comment of a house as "une machine à habiter," the French painter Jean Charlot wrote that, "from God's point of view a church is *a machine to live in*, and from man's point of view, *a machine to pray in*." Jean Charlot, "Catholic Art in America: Debits and Credits," *Liturgical Arts* 27 (1958): 21.

meaning"[16]? What is its *conceived space*? Which spatial representations does it use in order to introduce one into the Mystery? Which words and images does it provide in order to "express an attitude to the meaning of life as a whole"?

Surrounded by tall office buildings in the civic center of Oakland, the compact *Cathedral of Christ the Light* (2008) is a striking *sculptural presence* (Fig. 0.2).[17] The first *image* that it communicates is its own small and unusual *shape*. Instead of monumentality, the low-profile religiosity of this colorless pearl does not choose familiar *clichés* in order to "look like a church," but intentionally explores *archetypes*, such as tent, tower, crown, shrine, *vesica pisces* or mandorla in order to express the presence of the sacred in the midst of a secular city. The mandorla can be perceived in the floor plan and in the ceiling. This "spilled coffee cup" (see p. 2) could indeed have been a convention center, but once we know it is a cathedral, its shape makes sense as a symbol of sacred space. Considering its exterior, the message of Oakland Cathedral is unmistakably *contemporary*, blurring the distinctions with its secular environment. On the one hand, this lack of "churchliness" (McNamara) and Christian signs, apart from the modest wooden cross above the entrance, clashes with more traditional, vindicatory conceptions of religiosity, which promulgate prominent presences in postmodernity, stretching the distance between the so-called secular and the sacred. Such apparent *absence* of transcendence or *consecration* (Tillich) could even be interpreted as a shameful capitulation to the secular, which is perhaps seen as sinful and in desperate need of salvation. On the other hand, we must ask if its original shape itself can be a new religious symbol of transcendence for our time. Its unimposing size speaks about the humble place of the Church in our world. Although hermetically opaque, its prominent glass surfaces suggest fragility, transparency, and preciousness, in contrast to the unfortunate hard bunker of concrete on which it stands and that adds only more grayness to this prominently 'phallic space' (Lefebvre). For instance, an unmistakable atmosphere of rationality and professionalism lingers in the courtyard, oppressing nature to the geometrical order of *mental space*. At night, on one side this jewel sheds light over Lake Merritt and on another projects the figure of Christ over the city. More than a "spilled coffee

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16 Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology* (Digswell Place: James Nisbet, 1964), vol. III, 249. My emphasis.

17 For the following discussion, which is not intended to provide a complete analysis of this building, but only insofar as it touches on *kerygmatic space*, I will refer to the presentation of this church in Mary-Cabrini Durkin, *The Cathedral of Christ the Light* (*Oakland, California*) (Strasbourg: Éditions du Signe, 2008).

cup," its tent-like shape embodies an *uplifting* and *gathering* dimension, in which we can recognize the complementary dimensions of *domus Dei* and *domus ecclesiae* and Tillich's polarity between a movement *inwards* and a thrust *forwards* (*infra*).[18] The uplifting dimension proceeds from solidity to airiness as a symbolic *axis mundi*: concrete – glass – air held together by metallic "exclamation points."[19] Inside, the generosity of light and space raises one's spirit up to heaven. The enclosed, protected, and luminous interiority of this tent-shape proclaims that gathering people orients them to God. In Schwarzian language, Oakland Cathedral is a *chalice of light* (*infra*). The architecture transfigures natural light into the transcendent Light of Christ. This is also the *name* (its first word) that the building provides as interpretive subtitle to the event.

Architectural honesty (Tillich) can be discerned in its *materials* (glass, concrete, steel, stone, marble, and wood) that are left expressively bare, without particularly *beautifying* them with added representational decoration (Fig. 4.1). The materials are shown in the inner beauty of their structure, in the simplicity of their purpose. For instance, *concrete* – so massive and inhumane at the plaza outside – forms a ring that embraces the liturgical space inside. Its smooth, polished surface appeals to the sense of touch. This concrete wall gives a sense of protection, and yet, by its subtle inclination upwards, not only ensures stability in the likely event of an earthquake, but also gives leeway to the space, playfully rejecting its reduction to well-known associations as cold, hard, vast, and massive. Along this wall hang twelve candlesticks with the names of the Apostles. Words replace the 'pillars' of the Church. *Dark mist granite* connects baptismal font and ambo. The white *Carrara marble* of the altar-table proclaims its unicity as the central focus. Hence, these materials actually say something theological.

With iconographic minimalism and well-chosen symbols, the cathedral illustrates well Tillich's religious polarity between *sacred emptiness and*

18 In their document *Built on Living Stones*, the Roman Catholic Bishops of North America argue for churches that are "both the house of God on earth (*domus Dei*) and a house fit for the prayers of the saints (*domus ecclesiae*)." They must be "*expressive of the presence of God* and *suited for the celebration of the sacrifice of Christ*, as well as *reflective of the community* that celebrates there." *Built of Living Stones: Art, Architecture, and Worship: Guidelines of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops* (Washington, D.C.: United States Catholic Conference of Bishops, 2000), 16. My emphasis. This last point, being "reflective of the community that celebrates there," corresponds in my view with Tillich's argument for a movement inwards in architectural space, which I call the "appropriation" of the space.

19 These are the architect's words, as quoted in Durkin, 30.

religious symbolism, or the architectural form of Protestant principle and Catholic substance (*infra*).

Inside, this building respects Tillich's expressive polarity between *architectural honesty and religious consecration* through the careful scenography of well-chosen *symbols*, such as, for instance, the dominating image of *Christ in Majesty* from Chartres Cathedral – as if borrowing from a European archetype might give the cathedral some legitimacy (Fig. 4.8).[20] The spatial effect of passing through a darker and lower narthex before being bathed in light and greeted by this huge image is breathtaking. However, the computer-enhanced photograph lacks the depth, texture, context (and thus all relation with space), and historical patina (and thus all relation with time) of the sculptural masterpiece. Therefore, this decontextualized 'word' seems more overpowering than it actually is, making infamous the famous. In fact, the image is made of 94,000 perforations in aluminum panels, so that only light breaking into it allows one to see Christ the Light, inside as well as outside. This Omega-window with Christ the Savior responds to the plain Alpha-window above the baptistery, which symbolizes Creation. This symbolization is so abstract that it needs the interpretive word to be understood. Once understood, one can even see sunbeams peaking through foliage, as if in a jungle. The louvers in Douglas fir create the sensation of a clearing in a wood. The randomly placed organ pipes add to this organic effect. Both organ platforms are sculptural elements that playfully break the overall geometrical symmetry of the space. Light and wood are the main materials that define the cathedral's *synaesthetic space*: "Light does not simply *illuminate* this cathedral. It is *intrinsic* to it. The building creates an experience of light, a fluid, ever-changing experience."[21] Because light is changing, the subdued effect of diffuse light creates a pleasant atmosphere of surprising stillness and peace. This light-filled emptiness is the cathedral's greatest (implicitly) religious symbol. It is especially created as one, unified, whole

20 The whole building is effectively oriented towards Christ in Majesty, unmistakably Christus Victor. On Easter Vigil, it is somewhat awkward that the catechumens are asked to turn to the *geographical* West and East when respectively rejecting Satan and adopting Christ. However true liturgically, this turns them away from the central north-south axis of the building, in which the image of Christ in Majesty embodies the *liturgical* East. Turning towards a Face would make more sense. On this particularly happy night, dimmed lights and flickering candles initially graciously light the building with the right amount of light and shadow to create an atmosphere of mystery. However, far too bright lights cast this warm and shadowy atmosphere away at the Gloria, making everything overly white, hard, and transparent – reducing depth to mere surfaces. This was my experience on April 7, 2012.

21 Durkin, 8. My emphasis.

FIGURE 4.8 Christ the Light Cathedral, *Oakland, CA* (*Craig Hartman, 2008*). Weekday Eucharist on September 11, 2011

space, accentuating only slightly the distinction between sanctuary and nave. Nevertheless, the original plan for a sloping floor towards the sanctuary was abandoned due its cost, leading to the unfortunate solution of elevating the altar-table and cathedra on five steps, which increases visibility but heightens the separation between clergy and assembly.

Other symbols worth mentioning are the circular baptismal font and square altar-table on the main axis, the way of the cross in bronze reliefs on eyelevel around the nave, the bronze crucifix as a tree of life hovering above the circular

ambo delicately built with granite bricks (perhaps reminding one of living stones (1 Pe 2:5)), and the bronze statue of the Virgin at the foot of the clergy seating area. Furthermore, there are *floor inscriptions*, literal 'footnotes' that reveal *kerygmatic space* like subtitles interweaving Bible and building. For instance, the inscription in the porch reads: "I am the door. Whoever enters through Me will be saved. John 10:9." Entering the cathedral is entering the Mystery. Word becomes wood to be touched.

Then, draped around the baptismal font, another subtitle reads: "The Spirit of God hovered over the waters. And God said 'Let there be light' and there was light. Gn 1:2–3." (Fig. 4.9) This Biblical phrase brings together Spirit, water, and light in a condensed footnote of baptismal theology. Both the *image* of the water and the *word* of Genesis referring to the Spirit bring to mind that one is baptized in water and in Spirit (Mk 1:8). After entering through Christ the Door, pilgrims are welcomed by the Spirit around a baptismal ocean in miniature. Right above this circular sea, a smaller oculus opens as *axis mundi*, bringing to mind the heavens that opened at Christ's baptism and released the Spirit in the shape of a dove (Mt 3:16). This huge basin of holy water, in which people descend three steps to be baptized through immersion during the Easter Vigil,

FIGURE 4.9 Christ the Light Cathedral, *Oakland, CA* (*Craig Hartman, 2008*). Adult baptism during Easter Vigil, April 8, 2012

invites visitors to clothe themselves with the Trinitarian name in which they were baptized and to convert their itinerary, also literally, in order to enter Christ the Light. Right under the baptistery is the entrance to the mausoleum. At both sides of this entrance, water flows down, bringing to mind the passage through the Red Sea as the liberating Exodus towards the promised land – an appropriate image for entering Paradise. At the same time, the entrance to Christian life through Baptism is linked with the entrance to Paradise through the death and resurrection of Christ (Rm 6:1–11). At both sides of the baptistery by which one enters into the cathedral and into the Mystery are two confessionals as a visible sign of conversion, as a floor inscription indicates: "Christ Jesus came to save sinners. 1 Tm 1:15." Also the ambry with the holy oils is situated here in a niche.

From the baptistery, a central aisle reaches out towards the altar-table and towards the tabernacle centrally placed in the wooden reredos and accessible from the Adoration Chapel behind the sanctuary. In the exact center of the cathedral, a floor inscription reads the *chi-ro* monogram of Christ. The wooden pews curve around the altar-table in an open ring. The altar-table stands upon a circular platform of five steps, of which the lowest includes the following footnote: "Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God. Rm 12:1." Right under the altar-table is situated the old altar from the former cathedral. During funeral rites, the coffin is exposed on this altar, making tangible the connection with the Eucharistic sacrifice above.

Along the concrete wall, a few openings give way to side chapels with a more museal than devotional display of polychrome statues and paintings. At the entrance of each one is a floor inscription, such as "Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me. Mt 25:40." or "You crown the year with Your bounty. Ps 65:11." Architectural details are splendid in respecting geometrical forms, such as the connection between the porch and the curved wall.

Until this point, I have merely translated into words the *kerygmatic space* of Oakland Cathedral – that is, *conceived space* from a theological point of view. I have merely put words upon the *idea* or the spatial representations at work in minds and on maps with the intention for this building to be a cathedral in a contemporary metropole. Hence, I have said nothing yet about its *Eucharistic space* – that is, *lived space* from a theological point of view. Any church stands or falls by its ability to be *appropriated* by a particular worshiping community, if the structure is not of itself, apart from all visual symbols displayed in it, a symbol inviting people to prayer and

communion.[22] A living community is a church's greatest acid proof. I will discuss this dimension more extensively in the next chapter, but anticipate it here because of major failures of this *Eucharistic space* in Oakland Cathedral. The community's unfortunate *absence* is almost tangibly felt, in contrast to churches where a living community expresses its presence through displaying the names of baptized, married, deceased, and absent members, catechetical and charity works, images or statues of particular saints, devotional corners, and so on. Not only would it be better to use the side chapels in this sense, but the nave is also kept immaculate as a museum, impeding a multicultural community to dwell here by appropriating the space and leaving personal marks. Security agents continuously monitor that things are preserved orderly as they should be. Hence, the *Cathedral of Christ the Light of all Nations* might be the church of all nations on paper and in the ideas of *conceived space*, but it is not yet the *lived space* that this diocese deserves. As an 'ideal church', *Christ the Light* is far above the underground reality of *lived space* that Lefebvre dreamt about. Oakland Cathedral is a good example of a contemporary building that excels in *conceived space*, but with weaker *perceived* and *lived spaces*. With its conceptual footnotes and immaculate images (it even 'corrects' the Chartres sculpture by adding fingers where the original is broken), it takes the mind by the hand but tends to leave the (individual and communitarian) body behind. I agree with Richard Vosko in deploring that the *Eucharistic space* does not follow the kerygmatic symbolism of the building, by placing the altar-table in its exact center – as such, reinforcing the traditional idea of *axis mundi*:

> However, one wonders, in a liturgical context, what it would be like if the altar or table and pulpit were located in the natural center of this Cathedral? This spot would make sense not so much because of Mircea Eliade's *axis mundi*, but because the rituals occurring around the altar or table and pulpit are the actions of the whole assembly, the members of which are the subjects and not the objects of their narratives.[23]

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22 Bernard Reymond, "Le Paradoxe de l'architecture religieuse: remarques en marge de Paul Tillich" *Revue de théologie et de philosophie* 127/2 (1995): 143–153, at 153.

23 Richard S. Vosko, "The Language of Liturgical Space: Archetypes and Clichés," in *Proceedings of the North American Academy of Liturgy, Annual Meeting, San Francisco, California, January 6–9, 2011*, ed. Joyce Ann Zimmerman (Notre Dame, IN: North American Academy of Liturgy, 2011), 21–34, at 30.

In that case, one should be prudent not to imply a Schwarzian *ring* (*infra*), that, as a matter of fact, was in the architect's mind.[24] The example of the Roman Catholic Cathedral of Liverpool shows how such a ring can be devastating in a time when assemblies are decreasing. A landscape of empty chairs has a depressingly noisy *genius loci*. It would be better to adopt an *open ring*-configuration as it is today, but to introduce sacred emptiness as apophatic *doxotopy*, such as in the Sirens' chapel at Otaniemi; Ando's *Church on the Water*, Tomamu; *St Canisius*, Berlin (Fig. 2.5); and *St François de Molitor*, Paris (Figs. 5.6 and 5.7).

The victory of sacred failure. In conclusion, as *conceived space*, instead of the "greatest theological failure of our age (McNamara)," this cathedral is an honest victory of the human spirit, by conquering deceptive compromises of being Christian:

> Every new church in a new style is an experiment. Without the risks of experiments that fail, there is no creation. Perhaps people in the future will point to many failed experiments; but they will also point to the wondrous success: the triumph over the dishonest, the unquestioned, the anxiously conservative. New church building is a victory of spirit, of the creative human spirit and of the Spirit of God that breaks into our weakness.[25]

A colleague of mine, more inclined to worship within the familiar certainty of neogothic contours, has expressed his wonder why recent cathedrals have been experimenting with a new language instead of building on so-called 'sure values' in order to express the sacred. With Tillich I argue that the fact of continuous searching, of not choosing the status quo, is profoundly theological. It embodies the divine truth that lies in seeking – precisely because there are victories to be found, for the one who seeks, finds (Mt 7:8). In this sense, Tillich's use of the term *victory* in church architecture paradoxically corresponds to Rudolf Schwarz's refreshing plea for "true and sacred *failure*," because both intuit the same Mystery of human and divine cohabitation and cocreation:

> Church building is the great form of surrender, the work of hands which open, sacred inaction. It is that work which grows ever smaller, gradually ceasing, that work in which [human being] grows ever weaker, until, empty to the dregs, he [she] stands at the brink before God. [...] By ourselves we can build no churches: that, God must do. [...] That which is

24 See my presentation of Schwarz in Chapter 5.

25 OAA 213.

> new in the world comes straight from God at the moment when it is no longer hoped for; this is the mystery of true and sacred failure.[26]

The new in its purest and simplest form, diametrically opposed from superficial novelty, comes straight from God as inspiration and surprise, not from without but from within the creative human spirit.

Image. Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels*, Los Angeles* (*2002*)

> The foundation of sacred art is […] not the subjectivity of the artist or the public, but the objectivity of a cosmos, of which it reveals the blueprint of an immanent equation, of a latent number; and this golden ratio (*nombre d'or*) is Christ in glory at the heart of his world.
>
> FRANÇOIS CASSINGENA-TRÉVEDY[27]

Unlike the medieval architect, the contemporary architect who eschews historicism cannot rely on a shared vision "but instead must risk offering his or her own version of sacred space."[28] The concept of a Roman Catholic cathedral for Los Angeles began with the architect's acknowledging his own limits. Values of accessibility and visibility influenced its placement on the highest point next to a freeway. The plaza provides a garden-like buffer between profane and sacred space. The *Eucharistic space* celebrated inside expands here towards the world. A small garden of paradise invites one to contemplative rest at the foot of the bell tower. The Mexican *Our Lady of Guadalupe* has received an outdoor shrine at the junction of the two gardens.[29] The ochre dyed monolith glows in the generous Californian sunlight, evoking the simplicity of local mission architecture in adobe (Fig. 4.10).

Moneo opted to orient the sanctuary to the East, so that people enter the edifice from the apse. Above the entrance, a statue of the mestiza Virgin by the local Mexican-born sculptor Robert Graham welcomes the visitor. One enters

26 Rudolf Schwarz, *The Church Incarnate: The Sacred Function of Christian Architecture*, trans. Cynthia Harris (Chicago, IL: Henri Regnery, 1958), 229–231.

27 François Cassingena-Trévedy *La liturgie, art et métier* (Genève: Ad Solem, 2007), 150–151.

28 José Rafael Moneo, "Architecture as a Vehicle for Religious Experience: The Los Angeles Cathedral," in *Constructing the Ineffable: Contemporary Sacred Architecture*, ed. Karla Cavarra Britton (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2010), 158–169, at 159. Moneo was chosen among Venturi, Mayne, Gehry, and Calatrava.

29 Mexicans are not happy that they *only* received an outdoor shrine, in a cathedral meant to be of all peoples of this multicultural diocese. From an interview with Mexican worshipers at the Cathedral.

FIGURE 4.10 Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels*, Los Angeles,* CA (*Rafael Moneo, 2002*). *Exterior*

an elongated ambulatory intended "to receive a historical narrative, in words and images, recounting the history of the parish,"[30] and oriented upon a Baroque retable from the previous cathedral. To the right is the enclosed chapel of the Blessed Sacrament, gently lit by indirect light. At the end of the ambulatory, one turns right to encounter the baptistery, designed by the liturgical consultant Richard S. Vosko.

At the central and lowest point of the cruciform worship space stands the massive altar-table in Turkish Rosso Laguna marble ($2{,}5\times3\text{m}^2$). The floor pattern is centered upon this Eucharistic heart. The side chapels are inverted: they are open to the ambulatories and not, as in traditional basilical churches, to the central worship space. Light is filtered through alabaster clerestory windows, creating a diffuse atmosphere of transcendence. Cardinal Roger Mahony, who commissioned the edifice, began the custom of seating visitors in his cathedra, which combines types of wood from all continents, as a sign of gathering a plurality of nations. Hence, the sanctuary is freely accessed, especially

30 Ibid., 167.

FIGURE 4.11 Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels, *Los Angeles, CA* (*Rafael Moneo, 2002*). Weekday Eucharist on October 4, 2011

after liturgical celebrations, in order to touch a bronze crucifix behind the altar-table.

A prominent symbol is the cross clerestory in alabaster as a gigantic suspended reredos or cornerstone over the apse, which diffuses light as "a

mystical metaphor for the manifestation and presence of God."[31] Exteriorly present as representational *sign*, this cross is intended to express the unreachable Mystery inside as *symbol*.[32] But even more prominent are the tapestries of the Californian artist John Nava.[33] (Fig. 4.12) Their color, iconography, and texture blend well with the architecture. Their verticality enhances the angularity of Moneo's masterpiece. Perhaps the most impressive are *The Communion of Saints*, an idea suggested by Richard S. Vosko.[34] Their height enables the worshiper to engage with these saints as if they were of normal human size.[35] Their oriented iconography functions as a mirror to the assembly: earthly and heavenly Churches unite in greeting the Light to come, celebrated on the Eucharistic table for all nations. Silently, these depicted saints speak of the Savior who changed their lives. Among these saints from all ages and cultures, mirroring the worshiping assembly, some display the traits of Nava's family members and friends, but also of strangers and indigent people, in order to imbue the communion of saints with contemporary realism. He also included anonymous saints, as a theological statement that sainthood often remains unperceived. Impressive are their *individuality* – not in the least noticeable in their corporal height and historical costume – their *liveliness* – as if they were holding their breath in attractive rapture of their beatific vision – and their *contemporariness* – even though they do not belong to the same historical period, they stand together, side by side, as one family of sisters and brothers, friends in the Lord.[36]

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31 Moneo, 167.

32 The double meaning of this cross inside and outside has a prehistory: the first commission to the five architects was to design a small sanctuary in memory of Fray Junipero Serra. Based on the fact that Serra can be seen as apostle or colonizer, Moneo had located his statue outside, visible from inside through the frame of a window. Inside it would be a statue of veneration, outside a historical figure. Ibid.

33 He designed three tapestry groups, five tapestries of *The Baptism of the Lord* in the baptistery, twenty-five tapestries of *The Communion of Saints* in the nave, and seven tapestries of *The Holy City* in the sanctuary.

34 Richard S. Vosko, "John Nava's Tapestries: A Union of Theology, Art, and Architecture," in *John Nava: Tapestries from Proposal to Installation* (Art for the Cathedral: Judson Studios, 2003), n.p. Instead of painting the saints on canvas, which would have taken at least twenty years, the digital process reduced this time to a couple of months. The fresco-like tapestries were skillfully made in *Flanders Tapestries*, Belgium. The sandy background of the tapestries is inspired by photographs of the Via Dolorosa in Jerusalem.

35 Ronald E. Steen, "About the Tapestries," in *John Nava: Tapestries from Proposal to Installation* (Art for the Cathedral: Judson Studios, 2003), n.p.

36 For instance, James, Charles Borromeo, Catherine of Siena, Isaac Jogues, and Joan of Arc stand together on Tapestry 9 of the South Wall.

FIGURE 4.12 Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels, *Los Angeles, CA* (*Rafael Moneo, 2002*). Communion of Saints (Detail). Tapestries by John Nava

Representing or Re-presenting Heaven: Decoration – Ornament. These tapestries do not *decorate* a functional shed, literally representing "what heaven looks like,"[37] but as *ornament* they 're-present' (Harries) or bring present again a heavenly truth for our world today, because they possess depth:

> The attempts to give new life to old styles in architecture have given no genuine new life to the ornaments belonging to them. Just in ornament the lifelessness of these renewals shows itself. The age has lost its knowledge of the fact that an ornament can possess *depth*, not in the spatial

37 See in particular "Chapter 5. Architecture of the Sabbath: Church as Image of the Heavenly Jerusalem," Denis R. McNamara, *Catholic Church Architecture and the Spirit of the Liturgy* (Chicago and Mundelein, IL: Hillenbrand Books, 2009), 71–81. Although he acknowledges the sacramental role of matter, his visual hegemony bypasses the synaesthetic specificity of architecture as an intrinsically non-representational – or rather 're-presentational' art (Harries) – and pleads for a reading of Rev 21 as an architect's guide because "it tells us what heaven is like."

> sense, and can express spiritual relations, a distinctive contact between human beings and things.[38]

As crusade against the decontextualized "aesthetic chastity" of purely aesthetic approaches, Harries pleads for a return of ornament:

> It is primarily by its style that an artwork, more especially a work of architecture, communicates a mood that lets us adopt a definite stance toward whatever we encounter. And in architecture it is primarily ornament that is the vehicle of such communication.[39]

Harries distinguishes decoration from ornament: whereas the former is the "aesthetic addition to a building," the latter is genuine ornament "that articulates a communal ethos" and "carries the promise of an integrated way of life, a promise of full humanity and thus also of genuine community."[40] Ornament should not emancipate itself from its bearer as an art for art's sake, but has a *framing* and *serving* function:

> When ornament speaks too loudly with its own voice, as it does when it presents itself to us as a self-sufficient sculptural presence, its voice drowns out that of architecture. Genuine ornament so re-presents buildings that it renders what the buildings have to tell us more explicit. But this is to say also that buildings must have a meaning long before architectural ornament re-presents and thereby let us attend to this meaning.[41]

Without this re-presentational function, ornament turns into arbitrary decoration: "The point of architectural ornament is not to be appreciated as a self-sufficient beauty but to re-present the ornament bearer."[42]

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38 Hans Sedlmayr, *Art in Crisis* (London: Hollis and Carter, 1957), 74.

39 Harries, 62. Harries is in line with Gadamer's "aesthetic non-differentiation." In *The Ethical Function of Architecture*, Harries brings to light a *hermeneutical* dimension of architecture as an answer to unilateral *aesthetic* approaches, such as Nikolaus Pevsner's famous opposition between a bicycle shed and Lincoln Cathedral, as if the latter was legitimately called architecture only because of its aesthetic appeal. See Nikolaus Pevsner, *An Outline of European Architecture* (Hamondsworth: Penguin, 1958), 23.

40 Harries, 48, 60.

41 Ibid., 127.

42 Ibid., 136.

In this sense, even abhorred by the architect himself,[43] the depicted saints in Los Angeles re-present their bearer by reinforcing the material, Eucharistic, eschatological, and cosmological orientation of the building. In contrast, the polychrome statues of the Virgin in *St François de Molitor*, the *Jubilee Church*, and *San Paolo* are no architectural symbols belonging to the essence of the architecture, but they create secondary centers of devotion and worship within the space. The church of *San Paolo* at Foligno (Figs. 1.4, 5.12) is built as a modernist hollow box (like a beehive) around gild baroque sculptural objects, in a similar fashion to the aforementioned *Capela de Santa Filomena* (see Chapter 1).

The saints in Los Angeles embody *direction* (Fig. 4.12); in *St Gregory of Nyssa* in San Francisco they add *movement* (Fig. 5.5). Neither depictions, on tapestry and fresco, are essentially architectural, but they adopt and highlight the architectural movement. As such, these two-dimensional images participate in a third dimension, which makes them architectural. Both images have the intention of connecting the earthly gathering with the heavenly Church. Both depictions breathe deep serenity and inner joy. Paradoxically, it is their astonishing *realism* that causes their dismissal by some scholars, as if these images were unable to present transcendence.[44] However, especially in Los Angeles, the transcendent dimension is nearly tactile; you can almost hear the silent whisper of their longing. True, transcendence is not depicted or 'represented' on the tapestries. Nevertheless, it is 're-presented', made present, in the longing faces of the saints, who are *looking at* and *waiting for somebody*. They are all facing East, the Parousia of the Risen *Sol Victor*, symbolized by the Cross of Glory in the luminous clerestory window of the sanctuary wall. These two-dimensional images can easily be misunderstood as mere 'decoration' when they are not perceived within the context of the architectural event. As 'spatial representations' (Lefebvre), their spatial effect grounds their theological function, because – similar to Maximus' distinction between sanctuary and nave – they connect *kerygmatic space* with *Eucharistic space*.

In conclusion, the depicted saints in *Gregory of Nyssa* and *Our Lady of the Angels* (2D) 'frame' and 'serve' the architectural meaning (3D) of the building. Ornament is no *external* addition to a functional shed, but brings to the fore its *inherent* beauty, which introduces one into the Mystery. The Pantocrator in

43 Moneo had proposed artists such as Joel Shapiro, Martin Puryear, Agnes Martin, Susan Rothenberg, and David Hockney. But the committee chose members of the communities represented in the Archdiocese. Moneo complains that an opportunity was lost because, in his view, these artists "do not surprise or challenge." Moneo, 168.

44 McNamara, 151. Seasoltz, *Sense*, 284.

St Gregory of Nyssa goes beyond representational historicism, because He takes the saints of the Heavenly Jerusalem by the hand and starts the Eucharistic dance as Lord of the Dance; a dance that is mimicked by the worshiping community below: in this frieze, Christ is thus re-presented and expressed in an original way, that opens a space for the eschatological imagination on the verge of the 'already but not yet'. I will explore this in the next chapter, but first I engage in the specificity of architectural expression as evoked in the analysis of these two case studies.

Da Vinci Code? Architecture and Hermeneutics

> Architecture is primarily a matter of the significant definition of space: *not* of artistic symbols, however contemporary, or the decorative treatment of flat surfaces.
>
> RICHARD VILADESAU[45]

Nobody is illiterate in terms of 'reading' a church.[46] However, architectural hermeneutics is not about 'decoding' hidden clues as in another *Da Vinci Code*[47] in order to find meaning beyond the 'text'. Architecture is non-representational, or rather 're-presentational' (Harries). Kerygmatic space has the vocation to become *doxology*, word-of-glory, which is the foundation and crown of the liturgy.[48] In this section, in order to develop the fruits of the hermeneutical *theotopy* provided by the two case studies, I will proceed in two movements in order to clarify the hermeneutical function of *kerygmatic space*. First, the German philosopher Hans-Georg Gadamer (1900–2002) dwells on the concept of symbol and play in order to lay bare meaning in art. Complementary to this focus on iconography, the German theologian Paul Tillich (1886–1965) pleads for sacred emptiness as the iconoclastic component of *kerygmatic space*.

Word. Symbolic Play

> Thus architecture, this most statuary of all art forms, shows how secondary "aesthetic differentiation" is. A building is never only a work of art. Its

45 Viladesau, *Aesthetics*, 170.

46 See especially Rainer Volp, "Space as Text: The Problem of Hermeneutics in Church Architecture," *Studia Liturgica* 24 (1994): 168–177.

47 See Dan Brown, *The Da Vinci Code* (New York: Doubleday, 2003).

48 See the exquisite essay of François Cassingena-Trévedy, *La liturgie, art et métier* (Genève: Ad Solem, 2007).

> purpose, through which it belongs in the context of life, cannot be separated from it without it losing some of its reality. If it has become merely an object of aesthetic consciousness, then it has merely a shadowy reality and lives a distorted life only in the degenerate form of a tourist attraction or a subject for photography. The "work of art in itself" proves to be a pure abstraction.
>
> HANS-GEORG GADAMER[49]

By appealing to the practical nature of architecture, Gadamer seems to answer Dufrenne's tendency of a 'pure' aesthetic self-sufficiency, that he calls "aesthetic differentiation." Instead of the alienating simultaneity (*Simultaneität*) in which aesthetic differentiation places subject and object, art is contemporaneous (*Gleichzeitig*). Hence, Gadamer brings together masterpieces of the past and contemporary novelty: "Anyone who believes modern art to be degenerate *will not be able to understand the great art of the past properly either*."[50] Tradition means transmission more than conservation, and implies "learning how to grasp and express the past anew."[51]

Gadamer's basic contribution to a hermeneutics of art has been to lay bare the analogy with play. The "constant co-operative activity"[52] demanded of the perceiver of art is similar to the constantly repeated to and fro movement of play. Speaking of a painting, Gadamer states that it is not a question of merely seeing it, but "of constructing it, reading it word for word as it were, so that after this necessary construction it comes together as a picture resonant with meaning."[53] Gadamer makes sure that reading "is not just scrutinizing or

49 Hans-Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method* (London: Sheed & Ward, 1975 (1960)), 156. In this section, I draw on Gadamer's short essay *The Relevance of the Beautiful: Art as Play, Symbol, and Festival* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), first published in 1977 as *Die Aktualität des Schönen*, which provides three anthropological features (play, symbol, festival) for a hermeneutic approach, and the first part of *Truth and Method*, 1–169, esp. 81–100. In this latter work can also be found his most extensive exposition on architecture, 156–159. Aesthetic differentiation "distinguishes the aesthetic quality of a work from all the elements of content that induce us to take up a moral or religious stance towards it, and presents it solely by itself in its aesthetic being." Gadamer, *Truth,* 85. Gadamer goes on developing the 'decorative' nature of architecture, which he understands as three-dimensional, "obeying the space-creating potentiality" of the building, and not merely a superficial addition. Ibid., 156–159. Harries takes this Gadamerian line in *The Ethical Function of Architecture* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1998).

50 Gadamer, *Relevance,* 48. My emphasis.

51 Ibid., 49.

52 Ibid., 27. For this section on art as play, see also Gadamer, *Truth*, 101–134.

53 Gadamer, *Relevance*, 27–28.

taking one word after another, but means above all *performing a constant hermeneutic movement* guided by the anticipation of the whole, and finally fulfilled by the individual in the realization of the total sense."[54] He even goes so far as to say that "there is in principle no radical separation between the work of art and the person who experiences it."[55] That is what he understands as "aesthetic non-differentiation."[56] Hence, play requires to 'play along':

> The genuine reception and experience of a work of art can exist only for one who 'plays along', that is, one who performs in an active way [her- or] himself. [...] The participant belongs to the play. [...] Every work leaves the person who responds to it a certain leeway, a space to be filled in by [her- or] himself.[57]

This leeway or expansive space allows the work of art to 'work' upon oneself and to perform *oneself* in dialogue with the work of art. Hence, not representation (*Vorstellung*) but "'presentation' (*Darstellung*) is the mode of being of the work of art."[58]

Acquiring familiarity with and appropriating the process of reading is essential to the hermeneutic task: "We must realize that every work of art only begins to speak when we have already learned to decipher and read it."[59] For Gadamer, the "definition of art as the creation of genius can never really be divorced from the con-geniality of the one who experiences it."[60]

Art reveals meaning as a symbol. Two characteristics distinguish a symbol from a sign.[61] First, a symbol is a *fragment* in promise of a whole: "The

54 Ibid. 28. My emphasis.

55 Ibid.

56 Gadamer, *Truth*, 117.

57 Gadamer, *Relevance*, 26. Further on, he calls this leeway the "excess" that expands our finitude into new potential (such as limits create space by starting to play with them): the activity of play "necessarily reveals the human experience of finitude in a unique way and gives spiritual significance to the immanent transcendence of play as an excess that flows over into the realm of freely chosen possibilities." The excess of human play is the real anthropological ground of our artistic making and receiving that bestows permanence. Ibid., 46–47.

58 Gadamer, *Truth*, 115.

59 Gadamer, *Relevance*, 48.

60 Ibid., 21.

61 For the notion of symbol, see also Louis-Marie Chauvet, *Symbol and Sacrament*, A Pueblo Book (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1995), especially "Chapter 4.1. The Symbol and the Sign," 110–128. On the distinction between sign, allegory, and symbol, see also the

experience of the beautiful, and particularly the beautiful in art, is the invocation of *a potentially whole and holy order of things*, *wherever* it may be found."[62] In the same way, a church is a fragment that invokes the Kingdom, not through lavish iconographic representation but through presentation (Gadamer) and expression (Dufrenne). To Gadamer, the *variety* of this experience is significant: "Amidst the variety of art, this same message of the whole addresses us over and over again."[63] Therefore, "in any encounter with art, it is not the particular, but rather the totality of the experienceable world, man's ontological place in it, and above all his finitude before that which transcends him, that is brought to experience."[64] For contemporary church architecture, this implies the necessary variety of 'experiments' instead of one (basilical) *model* to imitate. Etymologically, as *tessera hospitalis* broken between host and guest, a symbol was a token of *recognition*, "*something* in and through which we recognize *someone* already known to us."[65] More than mere repetition, recognition implies that "we have come to know something more authentically."[66] Unlike the sign, the symbol does not refer to a meaning beyond the here and now, but "maintains us in the order of recognition and not of cognition, of summons or challenge and not of simple information," and therefore "unfolds the primary dimension of language."[67] Water, according to Louis-Marie Chauvet, is never as real as in baptism. Nevertheless, for Chauvet, no symbol is self-sufficient, and needs the interpretive word in order not to dissolve into mere fantasy. Whereas signs denote, symbols carry connotations. Architectural elements are at the same time signs and symbols: a door denotes an entrance to another space (sign), and its connotations speak about the importance or function of the space (symbol).

French cultural anthropologist Gilbert Durand, *Les structures anthropologiques de l'imaginaire: Introduction à l'archétypologie générale* (Paris: PUF, 1960) and *L'imagination symbolique* (Paris: PUF, 1964); Pedro Rodríguez Panizo, "La condición simbólica de lo religioso," *Miscelánea Comillas* 55 (1997): 53–75.

62 My emphasis. "The particular represents itself as a fragment of being that promises to complete and make whole whatever corresponds to it." Gadamer, *Relevance*, 32.

63 Ibid.

64 Ibid., 32–33.

65 Ibid., 31. My emphasis.

66 Ibid., 47. My emphasis. Compare with: "We do not understand what recognition is in its profoundest nature if we only regard it as knowing something again that we know already – i.e., what is familiar is recognized again. The joy of recognition is rather the joy of knowing *more* than is already familiar. In recognition what we know emerges, as if illuminated, from all the contingent and variable circumstances that condition it; it is grasped in its essence. It is known as something." Gadamer, *Truth*, 114.

67 Chauvet, 120, 123.

Second, there is no simple transference of meaning from object to subject. *Particular embodiment* is essential to the aesthetic revelation of truth:

> Art is only encountered in a form that resists pure conceptualization. Great art shakes us because we are always unprepared and defenseless when exposed to the overpowering impact of a compelling work. Thus the essence of the symbolic lies precisely in the fact that it is not related to an ultimate meaning that could be recuperated in intellectual terms. The symbol preserves its meaning within itself.[68]

In the same way, a building reveals its meaning only when visited. Meaning is concealed and revealed in matter. Indeed, "the work speaks to us *as a work* and not as the bearer of a message. [...] The symbolic does not simply point toward a meaning, but rather *allows that meaning to present itself*."[69] Consequently, there is an *increase in being* in art: "If we really have had a genuine experience of art, then the world has become both brighter and less burdensome."[70] Meaning is present "in the *concentrated* form of a particular and unique creation" that "presents itself as a pledge [...] to dwell upon it and give our assent in an act of recognition."[71] This implies "learning how to listen to what art has to say," that is, "rising above the universal leveling process in which we cease to note anything."[72]

Hence, "what is represented is itself *present in the only way available to it*."[73] Presentation (*Darstellung*), or symbolic play, implies not only "that what is represented is there (*das Dargestellte da ist*), but also that it has come into the There more authentically (*eigentlicher ins Da gekommen ist*)."[74] Gadamer clarifies representation with Luther's conviction that bread and wine in the Lord's Supper at the same time *signify* and *are*, consubstantially, the flesh and blood of Christ. In the same way, "the work of art does not simply refer to something, because *what it refers to is actually there*, [...] present in sensuous abundance."[75]

68 Gadamer, *Relevance*, 37.

69 Ibid., 33–34. My emphasis.

70 Ibid., 26. Compare with: "In the experience of art we see a genuine experience (*Erfahrung*) induced by the work, which does not leave him who has it unchanged, and we inquire into the mode of being of what is experienced in this way. So we hope to better understand what kind of truth it is that encounters us there." Gadamer, *Truth*, 100.

71 Gadamer, *Relevance*, 36. My emphasis.

72 Ibid. Compare with: "All artistic creation challenges each of us to listen to the language in which the work of art speaks and to make it our own." Ibid., 39.

73 Ibid., 35. My emphasis.

74 Gadamer, *Truth*, 114–115. My emphasis.

75 Gadamer, *Relevance*, 35–36. My emphasis.

As a consequence, a *reproduction* or a manufactured product cannot reproduce the unique event and the increase in being proper to an irreplaceable work of art. Any new church that is not a unique creation but a reproduction – such as the Basilica at Yamassoukro imitating St Peter in Rome – lacks an essential (theological) dimension, because it fails to be a (religious) symbol and is a mere (political) sign. That is the reason why imitations of Ronchamp are flat and uninspiring clichés.[76] In contrast to architectural archetypes (circle, square, mandorla, threshold, pyramid, wall, etc.), *clichés* are overused and predictable phrases that lack original thought. Ronchamp is archetypal in its *coincidentia oppositorum*, "as it incorporates color and no color, light and shadow, smooth and rough textures to create an inspiring sanctuary. While these factors are dualistic in nature, when used to create a harmonious composition they create an aesthetic and functional synergy."[77]

An interesting case study for symbolic play is the Roman Catholic *St Florian* church in München-Riem (2005) (Fig. 4.13).[78] Apart from its detailed architectural perfection, its evocative power is certainly due to the highly qualitative work of glass sculptress Hella Santarossa. She brings colors into the main worship space made of white walls, gray painted louvers, and dark wooden doors and pews, which are geometrically and cleanly interconnected with a Modernist freshness and clarity. The three primary colors blue, red, and yellow paint each of the liturgical corners with a different character: deep blue for the Marian chapel to the North, resplendent yellow for the main celebration space to the West, and fiery red for the baptistery to the South. The glass composition

76 Even in the case of the *Russian Orthodox Cathedral of Christ the Savior* in Moscow, its exact reconstruction in 2000 was intended to retrieve a sense of Christian pride and identity in the midst of a society where the central symbol of the Church's presence was radically erased. To reproduce the past might be interpreted as not addressing the hurt (which could have been done by materializing the wound) and to continue as if nothing had happened.

77 Vosko, *Archetypes*, 30. For Vosko, Gehry's style is a predictable cliché, but so are Meier's *Jubilee Church* in reference to Utzon's Opera House, or the San Francisco *Cathedral of St Mary of the Assumption* in reference to the Cathedral of Tokyo. Pei's pyramid in the Louvre is definitely an archetype.

78 This church, from the architect Florian Nagler, is part of an interdenominational oasis in the city, together with the Protestant *Sophienkirche*. http://www.sankt-florian.org/kirche/kirchenfuehrung [accessed 27.08.12]; *St. Florian. München-Messestadt Riem, Pfarrkirche St. Florian, 2005*, Kunstreferat der Erziözese München und Freising (München: 2008) [http://www.kunstreferat.de/pdf/stflorian.pdf; accessed 27.08.12]; http://www.nagler-architekten.de/ [accessed 22.03.13] This ecumenical complex aims to serve 6500 Catholics and 3000 Protestant worshipers.

FIGURE 4.13 St Florian*, München-Riem, Germany* (*Florian Nagler, 2005*)

here evokes Pentecostal flames of the Spirit, bringing to mind the rebirth of baptism through water and Spirit. As such, she gives the Christian sacraments a cosmic depth, suggesting sunlight, fire, wind, and water.

Her eschatological composition entitled *Resurrection* on the wall above the altar-table shows a simple white cross of glory in the midst of an abstract explosion of golden lines, clouds, stars, and crystallized rays that break out of the two-dimensionality of the window with an astounding dynamism, which invites a lifetime of contemplation (Fig. 4.13).[79] This non-figurative composition opens up 'another', virtual, imaginative space, a space for the "eschatological imagination," in the words of the German Protestant scholars Andrea Bieler and Luise Schottroff.[80] The warm sunny tones 'sing' of an embracing and warm vision of God. The cross gives this composition a Christological touch, providing a Name without a Face. More than mere background for the liturgy,

79 This window measures 7×17m^2, combining 35 glass panels (134×250×10). Santarossa's non-figurative work is highly original, forging smaller glass elements of different shapes into dazzling compositions of color, density, and light, in which she does not eschew texture and depth.

80 See my discussion in chapter 5.

this work goes beyond *representation* and becomes iconic *expression* (Dufrenne) or *re-presentation* (Harries) of the transcendent Mystery. It becomes a new religious symbol; such as the earliest Christian images were symbols of hope, Resurrection, and the Kingdom. They did not intend to *represent* Christ in a portrait but rather *express* his salfivic meaning.[81] For the Benedictine scholar François Cassingena-Trévedy, the Christian Mystery is latent in nature, and therefore it is essential for liturgical art to bring to light the cosmic embedment of this Mystery.[82] Only in this way can art be an *Ecce Homo*, that is, *re-present* Christ.[83]

In conclusion, *kerygmatic space* is not a mere *sign* pointing to Christian meaning but a *symbolic play* referring to the 'whole' of the Kingdom. Instead of "looking like" a church (McNamara), a church should "re-present" (Harries) the Church, making present the Kingdom as Temple of the Spirit.

Image. Sacred Emptiness

> The convincing power of a religious building strengthens the convincing power of that for which it is built.
>
> PAUL TILLICH[84]

81 Joseph Ratzinger, *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, trans. J. Saward (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2000), 117–118.

82 "The existence of liturgical art therefore lies in the ability inherent to all cosmic reality to be invited as well as being presented. […] If it is true that the liturgy is a privileged process of Christian initiation, that which is created fits itself primarily in this process: the Mystery, although transcendent, is latent in nature, so that it is always by the latter that we are moving towards the former." Cassingena-Trévedy, 162–163.

83 "The foundation of sacred art is therefore not the subjectivity of the artist or the public, but the objectivity of a cosmos, of which it reveals the blueprint of an immanent equation, of a latent number; and this golden ratio (*nombre d'or*) is Christ in glory at the heart of his world." Ibid., 150–151. In this phrase is a latent critique against limiting oneself to a numerical decoding of church architecture (*conceived space*) without reaching to the *lived space* of encountering Christ. For this Benedictine scholar, no wonder that the liturgy is "not the sacristy of things but the *sacred* of things; not their museum but their living pool (*vivier*); it is this high place of rendezvous where things have their most spacious breathing space." Ibid., 147.

84 Paul Tillich, "On the Theology of Fine Art and Architecture," in *On Art and Architecture*, ed. John Dillenberger and Jane Dillenberger, trans. Robert P. Scharlemann (New York: Crossroad, 1989) 204–213, at 212. Henceforth, OAA. It was only during the last decade of his life that Tillich delivered his four lectures on religious architecture. Hence, it should not be forgotten that they are occasional dealings with architecture, not systematic thought. Paul Tillich, "Theology and Architecture," OAA 188–198. [originally in *Architectural Forum* CIII, 6 (December 1955): 131–134, 136]; "Zur Theologie der bildenden Kunst und der

The German Protestant theologian Paul Tillich (1886–1965) understood space neither as object nor as container, but as the way and the power (*Raummächtigkeit*) in which living beings come into existence, by creating their own spatiality (*Raumlichkeit*).[85] Hence, "space is infinite because the human mode of creating space for oneself is that of breaking through (*Durchbrechung*) every finite boundary."[86] Close to Heidegger, dwelling is the "first and most immediate" human relationship (*Beziehung*) with space, in which human beings create *their* space: only from there are they able to "thrust forward into space at large, into infinite space."[87] Architecture has "to single out from the infinite space, into which we are thrown in our nakedness, a piece of finite space which protects us against the infinite," and "to give him that limited space from which he can then go forward toward infinite space."[88]

Tillich believed that architecture was the "basic artistic expression" which could provoke a renewal of religious art.[89] However, he felt that religious architecture was in crisis at his time, "without symbolic power to express the religious situation of the present."[90] That is why he pleaded for 'sacred emptiness'.

Architektur," in *Auf der Grenze* (Stuttgart: Evangelisches Verlagswerk, 1962); in *Gesammelte Werke*, Vol. IX: *Die Religiöse Substanz der Kultur*, ed. Renate Albrecht (Stuttgart: Evangelisches Verlagswerk, 1967), 345–355. Henceforth, GW. ["On the Theology of Fine Art and Architecture," OAA 204–213]; "Contemporary Protestant Architecture," in *Modern Church Architecture: A Guide to the Form and Spirit of 20th Century Religious Buildings*, ed. Albert Christ-Janer and Mary Mix Foley (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1962), 122–125; OAA 214–220. "Honesty and Consecration in Art and Architecture," first published as "Wanted for Religious Architecture Today: Honesty and Consecration," in *Protestant Church Buildings and Equipment* (September 1965); OAA 221–228. Earlier, I discussed Tillich's approach to church architecture in "Tillich and the Spilled Coffee Cup: The Breakthrough of the Spirit in Contemporary Church Architecture," *Bulletin of the North American Paul Tillich Society*, ed. Frederick J. Parrella, 38/1 (2012): 35–53 and "Le vide sacré du panier de linge, ou le lieu de l'histoire dans l'histoire du lieu chez Tillich," in *Paul Tillich: Interprète de l'histoire*, Forum Religionsphilosophie 31, ed. Marc Dumas, Martin Leiner, and Jean Richard (Berlin: LIT Verlag, 2013), 165–179.

85 Paul Tillich, "Das Wohnen, der Raum, und die Zeit," in *Die Form* 8 (1933), 11–12; GW IX, 328–332 ["Dwelling, Space, and Time," OAA 81–85].

86 GW IX, 330; OAA 83.

87 GW IX, 328; OAA 81–82.

88 OAA 192.

89 "Architecture is the basic artistic expression, just because it is not only art but because it serves a practical purpose. It is quite probable that the renewal of religious art will start in co-operation with architecture." OAA 124. See also "The renewal of religious art must come out of the house, the building, the building for the assembly of those who are grasped by an ultimate concern and express it in similar symbols." OAA 39.

90 OAA 71.

As far as I could retrace, there are five occurrences of the term 'sacred emptiness' in Tillich's writings.[91] He suggests that "the most expressive form of art today in connection with religion might be sacred emptiness; an emptiness which does not pretend to have at its disposal symbols which it actually does not have." There are two valuable elements in this intuition. First, it does not mean that church space should be devoid of all symbols, but only the ones that "have died," that is to say, "when the relationship they have mediated in opening up the soul is no longer powerful."[92] Second, Tillich is aware of the expressive power of the empty space as such. One could say it is 'expressive emptiness', in contrast to the "desperate," "ugly," "painful," and "simple" emptiness of the early Reformation, which did not understand the Roman Catholic expressiveness of their inherited churches.[93] Tillich calls it "sacred," which means that *as space* (call it kerygmatic) it is a religious symbol in itself (even though iconoclast). It is a symbol only when it expresses something more than just void. It is able to express the presence of the holy through its absence, in opposition to an "abundant manifoldness" of symbols. It is emptiness not by privation, but by inspiration, "filled with the presence of that which cannot be expressed."[94]

> The sacred void can be a powerful symbol of the presence of the transcendent God. But this effect is possible only if the architecture shapes the empty space in such a way that the numinous character of the building is manifest. An empty room filled only with benches and a desk for the preacher is like a classroom for religious instruction, far removed from the spiritual function which a church building must have.[95]

In discussing this notion of sacred emptiness, Tillich may have been inspired by the German Roman Catholic architect Rudolf Schwarz (or it might be just a sign of the times). In 1955, Tillich refers explicitly to Schwarz's visionary *Vom Bau der Kirche* of 1938, in fact just before dealing with sacred emptiness.[96] Although the literal term 'sacred void' appears only once in this original theory

91 Namely, in 1952 (OAA 40), 1955 (OAA 193), 1962 (OAA 218), 1963 (ST III, 171), and 1965 (OAA 227).

92 OAA 40.

93 OAA 215.

94 OAA 227.

95 OAA 217.

96 OAA 192.

of church architecture, emptiness is a recurrent theme, and is always a synonym for God's "resplendent abundance."[97]

Emptiness can only become sacred when it expresses our 'ultimate concern': "Purpose, in building assembly houses for ultimate concern, means not external purposes; it means adequacy to the religious character of the ultimate concern which is supposed to be expressed."[98] Prophetically, Tillich suggested sacred emptiness as the preliminary space "for the next foreseeable time,"[99] in which old symbols regain their expressiveness afresh, not by being at our disposal, but rather by "looking at us."[100]

For Tillich, sacred emptiness is the adequate architectural expression of the 'Protestant principle', which ensures "the majesty of the Divine against every human claim, including every religious claim."[101] In my understanding, 'Catholic substance' finds architectural expression in symbolic play, which mediates the presence of the holy:

> The experience of the presence of the holy by the kind of space the architect has created is what must be intended, even before anything else happens within this space. […] Since the experience of the holy is never directly possible, because it transcends everything finite, its presence must be mediated by authentic representation and symbolic expression.[102]

Although Tillich did not provide specific practical suggestions in order to maintain and create such sacred emptiness, he pointed out its lasting importance even for us today. Appropriate symbolism within sacred emptiness is the architectural expression of the complementary balance between Catholic substance and Protestant principle. In this line, two French Benedictine scholars, Angelico Surchamp (°1924) and François Cassingena-Trévedy (°1959) claim

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97 Rudolf Schwarz, *The Church Incarnate: The Sacred Function of Christian Architecture,* tr. Cynthia Harris (Chicago: Henry Regnery Co., 1958), 87. [Original: *Vom Bau der Kirche* (Heidelberg: Verlag Lambert Schneider, 1938)]. On emptiness, see Schwarz's discussion of the 'open ring' (67–94), especially 68, 77, 86, 90. See also his article "Das Leere," *Die Schildgenossen* 16 (1936/37): 130. See my discussion in Chapter 5.

98 OAA 40.

99 OAA 228.

100 OAA 40.

101 OAA 188, 218. Protestant principle and Catholic substance are two attitudes: "It is important to distinguish clearly between attitude and confession." André Gounelle, "Tillich: A Vision of Protestantism for Today," in *Spirit and Community: The Legacy of Paul Tillich*, edited by Frederick J. Parrella (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1995), 162.

102 OAA 226.

that a certain iconoclasm is essential to Christian art, which is intrinsically iconographic.[103] Iconoclasm would make place for the mystery, the hidden, for adoration.[104] According to Cassingena-Trévedy, obstinate figuration is somehow blasphemous.[105]

Tillich's claim for sacred emptiness is in line with his manifesto for 'honest' religious architecture, which does neither *imitate* former styles, nor *beautify* the structure, but looks for "the demands of the material" and "the adequacy and expressive power of the structure."[106] This can be understood in the modernist optimism of his time, which reacted perhaps too fiercely against an overloaded sentimentalism of *Saint-Sulpice* art, perceived as unnecessary decorative distraction. Similar claims for artistic honesty can be

103 "The new economy is characterized by a radical, congenital, and founding iconoclasm that distinguishes itself both from the old economy as from some pagan expression of the sacred. Going beyond all figuration […] must remain as a requirement and a horizon while the basic orientation of Christian art is iconographic." Cassingena-Trévedy, 157 n2.

104 "In order to be theological, Christian art cannot do without iconography, hence requiring figuration. But I think that it is good, from time to time, that a non-figuration gives us back a sense of mystery, of the hidden, of the sacred. It is even necessary that figuration 'swims' (*baigner*) in non-figuration; that the latter immerses and resolves the former in the eternal and the immutable. I sincerely believe that sacred art requests this and that no better service can be returned to the faithful, in the field of iconography, than to allow them to accomplish their meditation on the mystery of faith in adoration of God's mystery." Angelico Surchamp, *Points de vue sur l'art abstrait et l'art sacré* (La-Pierre-qui-Vire: Zodiaque, 1973), 29.

105 "Stubborn, outrageous figuratism has something of the blasphemous. It prohibits, stops abruptly the freedom of movement of the gaze and of the believing heart. On the contrary, artistic creation is a place of passage when it intimately involves the unspoken, the non-figurative, the absent, the void: it is conducive at the price of this renunciation." Cassingena-Trévedy, 158 n2. Why not think here of Denis R. McNamara's lavishly ornamented book?

106 OAA 203, 223. This brings to mind Tillich's problematic claim that "all specifically religious art is *expressionistic*." All authors on the question agree that his understanding of the expressionistic style as "the principle of breaking through the beautified naturalistic surface of things to the real depths which break out with disruptive power" needs some correction if it is to have any future. OAA 190–191. For instance, Russell Re Manning, *Theology at the End of Culture: Paul Tillich's Theology of Culture and Art* (Leuven: Peeters, 2005); Wessel Stoker, "Does Tillich's Theology of Art Have a Future? In Response to Russell Re Manning, *Theology at the End of Culture: Paul Tillich's Theology of Culture and Art,"* in *International Yearbook for Tillich Research*, ed. Christian Danz and Werner Schüßler (Vienna, Berlin: LIT Verlag, 2006), 197–208; Michael Palmer, *Paul Tillich's Philosophy of Art* (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1984) and Gesa Elsbeth Thiessen, "Religious Art is Expressionistic: A Critical Appreciation of Paul Tillich's Theology of Art," *Irish Theological Quarterly* 59/4 (1993), 301–311.

heard in those years from a Roman Catholic perspective.[107] According to Tillich, honesty is an ethical principle. The architect who imitates and beautifies "has ceased to be a mirror to his [her] contemporaries and instead prevents them from awareness of their actual being. He [she] deceives them – even though often they like to be deceived."[108]

Nevertheless, in pursuing honesty, one does not yet automatically create a *consecrated* place (Fig. 4.14). God can in principle be found in every place on earth, but due to our existential estrangement, we need specific places that remind us of God's majesty:

> It is the task of the church architects to create *places of consecration* where people feel able to contemplate the holy *in the midst of their secular life*. Churches should not be felt as something which separates people from their ordinary life and thought, but which opens itself up into their secular life and *radiates through the symbols of the ultimate into the finite expressions* of our daily existence.[109]

These places of consecration do not undo the principle of honesty. The principle of consecration allows places of honesty to "radiate through the symbols of the ultimate," rather than being separated from them. In contrast to Martin Dudley, who, favoring honesty above consecration, concludes that Tillich's criteria rule out the need for a specifically religious architecture, we can say with Tillich that churches, places of consecration, are necessary *at the moment*, as pointers to unambiguous life, in the midst of existential estrangement.[110] One

107 "The Christian has only contempt for pious frauds which are passed off as art, concrete used as though it were wood, steel used as if it were stone, false beams, simulated marble, imitation drapes. This is the heresy of Docetists in art. It is Christ seeming to be man, but not being man in reality." Kilian McDonnell, "Art and the Sacramental Principle," *Liturgical Arts* 25 (1957): 92. "What is required are well-made, genuine things: things that are simple, manly, solid, chaste, honest, unsentimental, noble, hieratic." John Julian Ryan, "Toward a Sound Religious Art," *Catholic World* 187 (1958): 11. Modernist architects such as Le Corbusier, Walter Gropius, Mies van der Rohe, and Adolf Loos promoted values like authenticity, functionalism, simplicity, essentialism, and honesty in architecture. As early as 1908, the modernist Austrian architect Adolf Loos claimed: "Lack of ornament is a sign of spiritual strength." Adolf Loos, "Ornament and Crime," in *Adolf Loos: Pioneer of Modern Architecture,* ed. Ludwig Münz and Gustav Künstler(London: Thames & Hudson, 1966), 231.

108 OAA 216.

109 OAA 226. My emphasis. See also OAA 189.

110 Martin Dudley, "Honesty and Consecration: Paul Tillich's Criteria for a Religious Architecture," in *The Church and the Arts*, ed. Diana Wood, Studies in Church History 28 (Oxford: Blackwell, ^{2}1995), 515–522, at 522.

FIGURE 4.14 St Nikolaus*, München-Neuried, Germany* (*Andreas Meck, 2008*)

could say that the principle of honesty is necessary for a religiously expressive architecture in the *broad, implicit* sense – for "there is truth in every great work of art, namely the truth to express something"[111] – but this principle should be balanced with the principle of consecration for a religiously expressive architecture in the *narrow, explicit* sense.

The emphasis on the autonomy of architecture is not enough, for "surprise wears off, and the new, if it lacks genuine adequacy to the meaning of the church buildings, becomes almost intolerable."[112] The principle of religious consecration is "the power of expressing the holy in the concreteness of a special religious tradition."[113] Such expression is therefore rooted in tradition. Tillich claims that religious architecture should express the holy, more than being merely a room for a gathering community. This has nothing to do with style, understood as the obligation to follow some normative canon, but rather through the expressiveness of its structure. According to Tillich, this can be done neither by the

111 OAA 194.

112 OAA 223.

113 Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology*, 3 volumes (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1951, 1957, 1963), III, 198. Henceforth, ST.

naturalistic way of imitating former styles, as following a sort of magical formula, nor by the *idealistic* way of beautifying the structure. The issue is about the way in which the space is arranged, whether there is room for 'sacred emptiness', and whether there is an honest search for new symbols – or a new way of presenting old symbols. Hence, Tillich comes to the following conclusion:

> The Spiritual Presence makes itself felt in the architectural space, the liturgical music and language, the pictorial and sculptural representations, the solemn character of the gestures of all participants, and so on.[114]

This reminds us of the quote at the beginning of this book: "New church building is a victory of spirit, of the creative human spirit and of the spirit of God that breaks into our weakness."[115] When the divine Spirit breaks into our weakness, she does not destroy our spirit but breaks through, makes itself felt as Spiritual Presence, and pushes our creativity to expression, for "the 'in' of the divine Spirit is an 'out' for the human spirit."[116]

Spiritus Loci as Expression for the Mind: Word and Image

> For a Christian anthropology persons are beings of an a posteriori, historical, and sensory experience. This holds also for that dimension of their existence in which they face God in their religion.
>
> KARL RAHNER[117]

114 ST III, 198.

115 OAA 213.

116 ST III, 112. On the concept of breakthrough in Tillich, see Uwe Carsten Scharf, *The Paradoxical Breakthrough of Revelation: Interpreting the Divine-Human Interplay in Paul Tillich's Work 1913–1964*, Theologische Bibliothek Töpelmann 83 (Berlin and New York: de Gruyter, 1999). I would suggest that Tillich's own narration of the Botticelli might shed new light on the expressive breakthrough, not the alienating and disrupting breakthrough of German Expressionism but a *spatial* breakthrough: "Gazing up at it, I felt a state approaching ecstasy. In the beauty of the painting there was Beauty itself. It shone through the colors of the paint as the light of day shines through the stained-glass windows of a medieval church. As I stood there, bathed in the beauty its painter had envisioned so long ago, something of the divine source of all things came through to me. I turned away shaken." OAA 235.

117 Karl Rahner, "The Theology of the Religious Meaning of Images," in *Theological Investigations*, vol. XIII, trans. Joseph Donceel (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1992), 149–161, at 149.

In this chapter, I have considered hermeneutics in order to examine contemporary church architecture as *kerygmatic space*. I have defined *kerygmatic space* as Lefebvrian *conceived space* (mental space living in minds and on maps) with the explicit intention of introducing one into the Mystery. Valéry would consider here churches that speak, but not necessarily sing. The church is thus intended to communicate Christian identity, not only an anonymous sacredness. Exteriorly, it does so basically through its shape and size. In this chapter, I have been concerned mainly with the particular way in which the *Spiritus loci* communicates with a non-verbal, spatial hermeneutics that cannot be codified.[118] For instance, the *small size* of contemporary church architecture is a theotopical word: it eschews monumentality in order to speak of a humble – one could also say: insignificant or marginal – presence in the secular city. Paradigmatic in this sense are *Notre-Dame de Pentecôte* at La Défense in Paris (Fig. 5.8) and Heinz Tesar's *Hoffnung der Welt* in Vienna-Donaucity (Fig. 5.1). The bulk of Moneo at Los Angeles is clearly not made to be an iconic monument, but is the result of a creation of interiority (Figs. 4.10–4.12). The small shrine at Oakland shines as a precious, fragile jewel (Fig. 0.2). In contrast, Botta's cathedral at Évry still opts for a fortress-like monumentality (Fig. 0.1).

The distinction between sign and symbol emphasizes that meaning is embedded in *matter*. The distinction between representation and expression (or re-presentation) highlights the frivolity of clichés and the depth of archetypes. Clichés are addressed to the mind, whereas archetypes prolong their power to *synaesthetic* and *Eucharistic space*. Ronchamp is archetypal not because it has the shape of a nun's hat or a ship but because of its cave- and womb-like *synaesthetic* power. The fish shape in Oakland might be a cliché, but its tent-form is archetypal, and could have been reinforced by a more liturgical *domus ecclesiae*-configuration.

Churches that excel in their *conceived space* tend to be rational, geometrical spaces addressed to the mind, evoking questions about the significance of things. These churches need the word – a lot of words – in order to be understood. For instance, *Notre-Dame de l'Arche d'Alliance* in Paris (Fig. 4.15) is built as a hermetic cube, a precious but empty "Ark of the Covenant (*Arche d'Alliance*)."[119]

118 This, in my opinion, is why architectural semiotics (focusing on signs) have not been successful. What is needed instead is architectural hermeneutics (focusing on symbols).

119 It is significant that, when visiting this church and *St François de Molitor* nearby with high school students, in the former they were puzzled by numerous questions, whereas the latter seemed to bring them peace through its clarity and transparency. The French philosopher Paul Valadier recently referred to my analysis of both churches in *La Beauté fait signe: Arts, Morale, Religion* (Paris: Cerf, 2012), 205–206.

FIGURE 4.15 Notre-Dame de l'Arche d'Alliance*, Paris, France* (*Architecture Studio, 2008*). *Exterior*

The exterior panels are entirely clad in the words of the Hail Mary, perhaps as an intention to let the building sing. Apart from these explicit words that gather the church's message, different elements function like words that communicate a specific Christian identity. The church's solid main doors on the first floor are the gates of a safe vault. The building sits upon twelve concrete columns – which stand for the twelve Apostles – but this has to be *explained* and is only visible from the garden. The baptistery is a small chamber under the church, which leads up to the altar-table through a narrow stairway.

Inside, people are distributed over three sides like in a theatre (Fig. 4.16). The dark colors and small size form part of its *synaesthetic space* that addresses the body and might evoke subconsciously the protection and security of a fortress, the interiority of a womb, and the warmth of a hearth. The atmosphere evokes mystery, but the numerous electric lights are so visibly placed in the louvers that they disturb rather than help to focus. The louvers should have been turned around in order to give indirect light.[120] A simple Latin cross is ingeniously projected upon the curved sanctuary wall, suggesting an ungraspable or even spiritualized Cross of Glory. Its tabernacle is a simple rectangular but gilt wooden box. The altar-table is a white marble cube, which might evoke purity, simplicity, nobility, and clarity in this rather dark space. Nave and sanctuary are subtly distinguished by the open metallic iconostasis, which continues outside: intended as a 'cloud of glory' it rather looks as if the church were in permanent construction (Fig. 4.15). Although this church explores a new archetype – the Ark of the Covenant – it still displays a traditional liturgical separation between nave and sanctuary – and no distinction in unity, as Maximus suggested. Its exterior message is also one of hermetic separation from the world, as if to protect a diminishing community and as if the holy were only to be found by setting sacred spaces apart.

In which way is Christ revealed in contemporary church architecture? In which way is a church an *Ecce Homo* (in Cassingena's stirring words)? John Nava's tapestries in *Our Lady of the Angels* are excellent theotopical illustrations (Fig. 4.12). They do not only allow us to engage directly with the saints, who are depicted in the contemporary traits of Nava's family and friends (anthropological entry of human beings), but also to engage with the humanity of Christ by the saints' orientation towards the One who has to come (anthropological entry of the God-man).[121] In this line, I have explored the image of saints in recent buildings as the re-presentation of heavenly reality in contrast to a superficial representation of the same. Architecture is nonrepresentational

120 A similar critique can be given to the louvers in the *Herz Jesu*-church in Munich.

121 Cassingena-Trévedy, 151.

FIGURE 4.16 Notre-Dame de l'Arche d'Alliance*, Paris, France* (*Architecture Studio, 2008*). Eucharistic celebration of Pentecost on June 12, 2011

but expressive in introducing one into the Mystery. The case studies have evoked eschatological and cosmological dimensions, which I will explore in the next chapter.

Hence, in this chapter I have examined church architecture not from the point of view of hidden allegorical representations but out of the expressive power of *iconoclasm* (sacred emptiness), in the theory of Tillich and in the practice of *Christ the Light Cathedral* at Oakland. I have also focused on *iconography* (symbolic play), by looking at the cross and the saints in *Our Lady of the Angels* in Los Angeles. Both *sacred emptiness* and *symbolic play* are dimensions of the *Spiritus loci* as expression. Contemporary church architecture continues to sing about Christ in a secular city, but with emphases differing from historical models. As an heir of Modernist architecture, contemporary church architecture has to incorporate sacred emptiness without falling into mere emptiness without transcendence.

FIGURE 5.1 Christus Hoffnung der Welt, *Wien-Donaucity, Austria* (*Heinz Tesar, 2000*). Sunday Eucharist on April 7, 2013

FIGURE 5.2 St Gregory of Nyssa Episcopal Church, *San Francisco, CA* (*John Goldman, 1995*). Sunday Eucharist on January 8, 2012. Eucharistic doxology

CHAPTER 5

Eucharistic Space: Dance and Garden

Appropriating a Church – Appropriating the Mystery

For the celebration of the Lord's supper a moderately large, well-proportioned room is needed, in its center a table and on the table a bowl of bread and a cup of wine. The table may be decorated with candles and surrounded by seats for the congregation. That is all. Table, space and walls make up the simplest church.

RUDOLF SCHWARZ, *The Church Incarnate* (1958 (1938)), 35

There is a continuing need for the creation of festal places on the ground of everyday dwellings, places where individuals come together and affirm themselves as members of the community, as they join in public reenactments of the essential: celebrations of those central aspects of our life that maintain and give meaning to existence. The highest function of architecture remains what it has always been: to invite such festivals.

KARSTEN HARRIES, *The Ethical Function of Architecture* (1998), 365

Liturgy alone must give form to what we are when in church; being-there is subordinate to it.

JEAN-YVES LACOSTE, *Experience and the Absolute* (2004 (1994)), 36

The primary purpose of the space [is] really to fold people into a sacred garment to act out, using carefully crafted verbal and nonverbal symbols, the stories of their ancestors as well as their own.

RICHARD S. VOSKO, "The Language of Liturgical Space: Archetypes and Clichés" (2011), 23

Celebrating Mysteries that Embody Hope

If it is true that the liturgy is a privileged process of Christian initiation, that which is created fits itself primarily in this process: the Mystery, although transcendent, is latent in nature, so that it is always by the latter that we are moving towards the former.

FRANÇOIS CASSINGENA-TRÉVEDY[1]

1 François Cassingena-Trévedy, *La liturgie, art et métier* (Genève: Ad Solem, 2007), 162–163.

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As a last step of my threefold method, it is indispensable to examine how people *appropriate* their churches over time. For it is only in the appropriation of their churches that they appropriate the Mystery. The concept of appropriation goes beyond that of mere use. It suggests that people gradually make the buildings their own. For this chapter, I have chosen two case studies that make this appropriation particularly clear. After chapels with their emphasis on *synaesthetic space* and cathedrals highlighting *kerygmatic space*, in this chapter I will focus on two parish churches, *St Gregory of Nyssa Episcopal Church* in San Francisco (1995) and the Roman Catholic church of *St François de Molitor* in Paris (2005).

Appropriation indicates that a particular liturgy is originated in the dialogue between community and building. From the point of view of architecture, the *spatial configurations* of the communities are of particular interest. Theologically speaking, they embody an *eschatological* fullness. With this term, no otherworldly escapism is intended, but rather a radical *embodied* and *cosmological* eschatology, which places human being in community in this world.[2] I adopt Karl Rahner's understanding of eschatology as the "futurity of the present" and its centeredness on Christ and on salvation.[3] As Rahner proposes a search for new images in order to understand the eschatological reality, I suggest that the garden in *St François de Molitor* and the dance in *St Gregory of Nyssa* might be such new forms of expression, which must still be verified by relating them to established assertions and images.[4]

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2 Eschatology, a term coined by the Lutheran theologian Abraham Calov in 1677, started as a theological doctrine of the *eschata* (the last things: traditionally, death, resurrection, the intermediate state, heaven, and hell). Most recently, especially in the "century of eschatology," the focus shifted on the *eschaton* (the ultimate) and on how eschatological hope breaks the *linearity* of time open to reveal its eternal *depth*. Paul Tillich's understanding of eschatology, for instance, is the breakthrough of the unconditional within the conditional. As such, eschatology can be understood as the hermeneutical basis and principle of theology and not as its frivolous and science-fiction-like epilogue. John Robinson noted that the term *eschaton* does not occur in the New Testament, but only the masculine *ho eschatos*, giving the neutral *eschaton* the personality and face of Christ. Such a Christocentric eschatology is at the basis of my chapter on eschatological architecture. See Christoph Schwöbel, "Last Things First? The Century of Eschatology in Retrospect," in *The Future as God's Gift: Explorations in Christian Theology*, ed. D. Fergusson and M. Sarot (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2000), 217–241.

3 Karl Rahner, "The Hermeneutics of Eschatological Assertions," *Theological Investigations*, vol. IV, trans. K. Smith (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1974), 323–346. For a recent discussion of Rahner's eschatology, see Peter C. Phan, *Eternity in Time: A Study of Karl Rahner's Eschatology* (Cranbury, NJ, London, and Mississauga, Ontario: Associated University Presses, 1988).

4 "We cannot say however with certainty that the new assertion, more abstract for instance or more immediately Christological or more formally anthropological, *adequately* renders the real content of the assertion which has been translated and interpreted. And so it must

The French phenomenologist Jean-Yves Lacoste evoked an "eschatological reduction"[5] of the liturgy: in phenomenology, reduction is used in order for the phenomenon to appear more clearly. Hence, in liturgical enactment, the world is momentarily placed between brackets so that the eschatological Kingdom – or the eternal depth of our world – appears more clearly:

> The truth at work in liturgical architecture is other than the truth at work in the temple where the sacredness of the earth is crystallized. […] Liturgical architecture is in tune with another destiny and another rhythm. […] It is our dwelling place only at intervals, when we accept that our time is the *kairos* of the encounter with God, and no longer the *chronos* that is the measure of our presence in the world.[6]

The liturgical subversion of the topological does not create "a theophanic space" protected from the outer world because "place and carnality are a priori conditions from which there is no exemption for whoever takes the risk of liturgy."[7] We pray, we dwell at the limit, not in the beyond: "Not even the most beautiful architecture can summon up a presence."[8] But liturgical architecture allows that eschatology has a place on earth: "Liturgy permits us to conceive of a topos of the *eschaton*," and "certainly neither produces nor establishes the *eschaton*."[9] Hence, liturgy is profoundly eschatological, combining the *not yet* with an *already*: "Liturgy conjoins expectation with the recognition of a presence. The world is the kingdom of the non-Parousia, and it wishes for the Parousia."[10] This is why "patience is a major liturgical

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always remain connected with the ancient assertion, and every eschatology, no matter how modern, always remains a retrospective interpretation of the old, not a new and better assertion which replaces the old." Ibid., 345.

5 He calls this bracketing of earth and world also a "liturgical" or a "theological reduction." Jean-Yves Lacoste, *Expérience et absolu: Questions disputées sur l'humanité de l'homme* (Paris: PUF, 1994), 210 [*Experience and the Absolute: Disputed Questions on the Humanity of Man*, Perspectives in Continental Philosophy 40, trans. Mark Raftery-Skeban (New York: Fordham University Press, 2004), 175] and *Note sur le temps: Essai sur les raisons de la mémoire et de l'espérance* (Paris: PUF, 1990), 122, 149. For an excellent introduction to Lacoste, see Joeri Schrijvers, *Introduction to Jean-Yves Lacoste* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2012).

6 Lacoste, *Experience*, 36. See esp. "§14. Corporeality and Eschatology," 37–39 and "§17. Dwelling at the Limit," 42–44.

7 Ibid., 45, 33.

8 Ibid., 48.

9 Ibid., 52.

10 Ibid., 58.

virtue."[11] The *eschaton* "appears as a present from which nothing is lacking: a present that is saturated with meaning, but which also may live in the joy of presence."[12]

In the terms of the French philosopher Michel Foucault, places in which the Kingdom becomes visible could be called eschatological *heterotopias* that function as mirrors for our society:

> Utopias are sites with no real place. [...] There are also [...] real places [...] which are something like counter-sites, a kind of effectively enacted utopia in which the real sites, all the other real sites that can be found within the culture, are simultaneously represented, contested, and inverted. Places of this kind are outside of all places, even though it may be possible to indicate their location in reality. Because these places are absolutely different from all the sites that they reflect and speak about, I shall call them, by way of contrast to utopias, heterotopias.[13]

Like utopias, heterotopias create another world, another place we dream of. But contrary to utopias, heterotopias are real places embedded and embodied in this world. These real places give us *already* a sense of another place – call it Kingdom – but they are *not yet* this Kingdom. Hence, how can our churches be *heterotopias* for the eschatological imagination, that is, "effectively enacted utopias," real places embedded and embodied in our world, that give us a glimpse and a sense of the Kingdom by appealing at our imagination?

I call *Eucharistic space* the space that comes to the fore in this communitarian appropriation.[14] *Eucharistic space* – the theological transposition of Lefebvre's *lived space* – brings to light an eschatological vision that *synaesthetic*

11 Ibid., 91.

12 Ibid., 59. "The *eschaton* is, not the horizon in which the person who prays lives, but already the hidden *present* of our prayers." Ibid., 61.

13 Michel Foucault, "Of Other Spaces," trans. Jay Miskowiec, *Diacritics* 16 (1986): 22–27. Not only churches may function as eschatological heterotopias: there are so many places in our world that give us a glimpse of the Kingdom, in prisons, in hospitals, in schools, in homes.

14 In this book, the term *Eucharistic space* is not reserved to the Roman Catholic sacrament, in the same way as *liturgy* is not limited to a Eucharistic celebration in the Roman Catholic sense, but evokes the eschatological vision of a Kingdom of self-giving, justice, and peace. Another term could be *eschatological space*, but the term *Eucharistic space* has the advantage to underline its celebrative and present character with a center and not just a horizon (Christ is in our midst). For an eschatological understanding of the Eucharist, see Geoffrey Wainwright, *Eucharist and Eschatology* (Akron, OH: OSL Publications, 2002).

or *kerygmatic space* on their own cannot. The first case study will suggest an eschatological vision of a *dance* around the altar-table, highlighting Eucharistic and ethical dimensions; the second an eschatological vision oriented towards a *garden*, highlighting ecological and ecclesiological dimensions. Hence, dance and garden form the diptych of *Eucharistic space*. I call liturgical space *Eucharistic* in order to simultaneously *define and broaden* this reality that comes to the fore. It is *defined* because, as a Roman Catholic, I envision the Eucharist as the "source and summit" of all liturgical reality (LG 11). Every liturgical gathering is therefore colored by the Eucharist. This is the first, sacramental and ethical dimension of *Eucharistic space*. It is *broadened* in its cosmological repercussions. The French Benedictine scholar François Cassingena-Trévedy (1959) defines liturgy as 'cosmology', that is, the proper *cosmos* that the *Logos* creates, in which the whole of creation receives its "real presence."[15] Because eschatology is concerned with a new heaven and a new earth (2 Pe 3:13), it takes creation seriously; and because creation is taken seriously, it must be concerned with space in its three dimensions.[16] This is the second, eschatological and ecological dimension of *Eucharistic space*.

Dance. St Gregory of Nyssa Episcopal Church*, San Francisco* (*1995*)

> The interiors of sacred spaces typically are organized as a place for engaging in the act of ritual making. Normally these rituals are designed to take people from one place to another in their lives through life cycle events. [...] Fundamentally, *the space is all about fostering relationships with God, the universe, with others in the community, and with those outside the community*. Liturgical architecture is the perfect metaphor for what may be described as the inner and outer layers of spirituality.
>
> RICHARD S. VOSKO[17]

The fairy tale shape of this wooden church (Fig. 5.3) reveals already from the outside its provocative originality within the Church landscape, but it suits well in the Bay Area and it suits even better the well-forged liturgical life that founders and

15 "'Real presence' is also the real presence of things because of Jesus Christ who takes them into his hands, without taking away their existence." Cassingena-Trévedy, 162 n7.

16 Compare with Philip Sheldrake, *Spaces for the Sacred: Place, Memory, and Identity* (London: SCM Press, 2001), 88–89. In his third chapter on the practice of Catholic place and the Eucharist (64–89), Sheldrake examines the Eucharist subsequently as *catholic* place, *ethical* place, *reconciling* space, and *eschatological* space.

17 Richard S. Vosko, "The Language of Liturgical Space: Archetypes and Clichés," in *Proceedings of the North American Academy of Liturgy: Annual Meeting, San Francisco,*

FIGURE 5.3 St Gregory of Nyssa Episcopal Church, *San Francisco, CA (John Goldman, 1995). Exterior*

first rectors Richard Fabian and Donald Schell created gradually over the years.[18] Inside, the church consists of two clearly distinct spaces with a complementary character. A traditional distinction between nave and sanctuary is abolished. Sacredness is explicitly not defined in terms of separation. The whole church becomes sanctuary, sacred space. An octagonal rotunda, serving as gathering and Eucharistic space around a modest wooden altar-table, opens up into an elongated space for the liturgy of the Word, in which rows of colorful chairs face each other alongside a wooden *bema* between the ambo and the presider chair.

California, January 6–9, 2011, ed. Joyce Ann Zimmerman (Notre Dame, IN: North American Academy of Liturgy, 2011), 21–34, at 27.

18 *St Gregory of Nyssa Episcopal Church* was designed by the Nebraska-born Californian architect John Goldman. I consulted especially Michael J. Crosbie, *Architecture for the Gods* (New York: Watson-Guptill, 2000), 128–134; Donald Schell, "Rending the Temple Veil: Holy Space in Holy Community," in *Searching for Sacred Space: Essays on Architecture and Liturgical Design in the Episcopal Church* (New York: Church Publishing, 2002), ed. John Ander Runkle, 149–181; Richard Kieckhefer, *Theology in Stone: Church Architecture from Byzantium to Berkeley* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 37–41.

In the liturgy of *St Gregory of Nyssa*, we can recognize four basic energy patterns, going from *invigorating* energy (thrust) and *ordering* energy (shape) to *playful* interactive participation (swing) and *contemplative* sustained stillness (hang):

> We are formed through the rhythms and dynamics of our worship as people who come to their feet, who are ready for action, inspired for action (*Thrust* energy). We are formed as people who name and claim God's reality, who embody the vision of the reign of God, who share with others the sure foundation that is God (*Shape* energy). We are formed as people who love deeply, relate personally and intimately, who feel the ebbs and flows of life and emotion and respond to a hurting world (*Swing* energy). And we are formed as those who can listen for the still small voice leading and guiding us, able simply to "be" present, steeped in awe-filled moments, guiding others to the presence of the ever-mysterious God (*Hang* energy).[19]

Without transition from the street, one sets foot into the sacred heart of this church and this community: the colorful and festive rotunda, place of *gathering and welcoming*, place of *Eucharist and dance* (Fig. 5.2), and on Fridays place of the *food pantry* (Fig. 5.5), three dimensions of this *Eucharistic space* around the altar-table, virtually the only furniture in this space, giving all activities a Eucharistic character. The first of these activities is the *warmhearted experience of being welcomed* into a family of open-minded people. The space is bright, open, peaceful, colorful, musical, and in many ways has a 'human' scale and a 'human' feel. People move across in all directions, giving a sense that the entire place is inhabited by a community that knows what it is doing, and that feels at home in this space. One does not get a sense of a 'sacred place' where you should just shut up, find your place, and remain unnoticed. This sacred place is first and foremost a house to live in, a house that welcomes friends and strangers, truly a *domus ecclesiae*. I am amazed how a place that fosters informal contacts so well is at once transfigured into a *domus Dei*, into a house of divine *rhythm*, at the sudden start of the celebration. Indeed, it is a carefully carried out *rhythm* that fills the place and the hearts of the gathered, as a gentle breathing pace adequately oscillating between contemplative stillness and surprisingly rapid movements of Paschal urgency.

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19 Marcia McFee, "Primal Patterns: Towards a Kinesthetic Hermeneutic," *Proceedings of the North American Academy of Liturgy: Annual Meeting, Baltimore, Maryland, January 2–5, 2009* (Notre Dame, IN: North American Academy of Liturgy, 2009), 136–157, at 153–154.

Entrance ritual: Thrust energy. Suddenly, the door of the vesting room opens; a small procession comes out, moving fast and hastily towards the altar-table, on which earthen cups are already gathered. From the beginning of the celebration, the Lord, presiding at his altar-table, is the center. Festively vested lay helpers carry candles and two colorful umbrellas, indicating the place of the presider carrying an Ethiopian iron cross with a colorful cloth streamer, and of the lay deacon carrying the Gospel book, both moving quickly among the congregation and greeting them cheerfully. The presider greets: "Christ is Risen!" The assembly answers: "He is risen indeed!" The Choir sings a hymn. Together we sing the Trisagion, the Glory, and an Alleluia, and are invited to move to the seating area while singing.

The entrance ritual at *St Gregory* can be understood as a *thrust* pattern: an informal gathering in the rotunda is suddenly, through a powerful and confident moment of greeting and singing, transformed into a coordinated procession toward the seating area. This boost of energy adequately bridges the informal gathering and greeting around the altar-table and the ordered seating focused on listening. McFee describes thrust energy as an overt, explosive, focused, and outward excitation, with an emphasis on action, in order to become part of the energy rather than its recipients. Because of its powerful intensity, this pattern does not usually last long. McFee suggests that thrust energy goes with the image of "a transformational God – a God on the move."[20] As the most adequate architectural setting for this pattern, McFee suggests "strong lines" and processional, "linear space needed for movement toward a goal."[21]

Nonetheless, if she would have examined *St Gregory*, she might have come to a different suggestion. In *St Gregory*, there are indeed strong lines, but the circular pattern and the empty space around the altar-table are better suited than processional space for the more spontaneous and explosive thrust energy. Processional space is also ordering space, and thus articulates *shape energy*. Kieckhefer's claim for processional space might also be born out of the need to retrieve thrust and shape energy in our liturgies. At *St Gregory*, the difference between the liturgical spaces also addresses *thrust energy*, which is born in contrast. The two main spaces out of which the church is made are clearly made for a different energy pattern. The rotunda shapes the congregation into a free and flexible gathering around the altar-table. The Spirit of this gathering space is characterized by flexibility, spontaneity, urgency, freedom, informality, and temporality. People will be standing or on the move. From the start, the

20 Ibid., 142.

21 Ibid., 140.

bodies take part in the liturgy. It is essential that the liturgy starts and ends here, fostering community life by overlapping so closely with the spontaneous configuration of a group of like-minded people. The first image that *St Gregory* offers is also the emblematic opening image of Schwarz's *Vom Bau der Kirche*, to which I have already referred.[22]

Liturgy of the Word: Shape energy. The oblong space replete of furniture invites the *shape pattern* of the Liturgy of the Word (Fig. 5.4). Order, repetition, sameness, symmetry, balance, moderation, contained movement, and attentive stillness characterize this energy, where everything has its place and order. Due to its invariant stability, the inherent dynamism of this pattern could be easily overlooked, especially its power to shape a congregation. McFee suggests

FIGURE 5.4 St Gregory of Nyssa Episcopal Church*, San Francisco, CA* (*John Goldman, 1995*). Sunday Eucharist on November 6, 2011. Liturgy of the Word

22 "For the celebration of the Lord's supper a moderately large, well-proportioned room is needed, in its center a table and on the table a bowl of bread and a cup of wine. The table may be decorated with candles and surrounded by seats for the congregation. That is all. Table, space and walls make up the simplest church." Rudolf Schwarz, *The Church Incarnate: The Sacred Function of Christian Architecture*, trans. Cynthia Harris (Chicago: H. Regnery Co., 1958), 35.

the image of a steadfast, transcendent, and enduring God as the foundation to accompany shape energy. She proposes a more symmetrical spatial arrangement, with specific functional zones, delineated through borders and levels. Indeed, in *St. Gregory*, the seating area makes a clear hierarchical distinction between the congregation and the presider, who is seated on the main axis of the building, under a colorful mural where the bishop Saint Gregory of Nyssa preaches in a pulpit, as if overlooking and consecrating the actual preaching at his feet. Above him, Christ and the soul as bride and bridegroom from the Song of Songs are married by God as the mother-in-law. The place in which this occurs – indicated by the red cloth in traditional fashion – has the shape of the church building itself. This depiction of mystical wedding is the theological hermeneutic of what happens during a Eucharistic liturgy. The congregation is shaped into facing rows of chairs. This configuration is particularly well suited for listening to the *proclaimed word* at the ambo, the *preached word* from the presider chair, and the *intercessory prayers*.

Receptive silence: Hang energy. After each of the two *Biblical readings*, a well-chosen moment of silence is particularly dense, filled with the deep echoing sounds of Tibetan bells, which hold in suspense the divine Word that no one can fathom. Most of the people close their eyes for silent prayer or spiritual aftertaste. These celestial moments in which the assembly again becomes aware of each other, tastes the divine echoes of the rhythmic Word, and sits quietly together in an atmosphere of sustained stillness, belong to a *hang pattern*. Hang energy is deeply contemplative energy, focusing on being present rather than on doing. Simplicity, smoothness, relaxation, connectedness, and intensity are characteristics of this pattern. Perspicaciously, McFee observes that spoken directives or transition speech are totally unnecessary in this pattern, which speaks for itself and fosters, through absorption of the hanging atmosphere, a certain ability to go with the flow. The theological image belonging to this pattern might emphasize God ever present as grounding mystery. For this pattern, McFee suggests womb-like architecture, playing with light and shadow in order to give a sense of mystery.

In line with this pattern, the American ritual theorist Ronald L. Grimes spoke of "the curvature of liturgical indirection" and the need for being "attuned" to the environment in contrast to a more common liturgical "erectitude" and *linearity in time*, such as exposed in shape energy (which is therefore better architecturally expressed by clear hierarchical and linear spaces).[23] I would suggest that this indirection provides an experience of *space*

23 Ronald L. Grimes, *Ritual Criticism* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1991), 55; *Reading, Writing, and Ritualizing* (Washington DC: Pastoral Press, 1993), 45.

(as atmosphere rather than container) rather than of time, focusing indeed on curves rather than on lines, allowing one to be aware of the real and virtual spaces one is in, even suggesting spatial metaphors for God. There is no direction to go, there is but a place to be. Such an experience made me uncomfortable at the beginning, so much are we unfamiliar with these moments in our current liturgies. As McFee rightly pointed out, hang energy is rightly called *energy*, and thus a valuable source for our liturgical life that would be impoverished without.

Eucharistic dance: Swing energy. After the liturgy of the Word, the congregation moves in processional dance to the rotunda, going a few times around the altar-table. This processional move could be characterized as *swing energy* in McFee's kinesthetic hermeneutic. This energy pattern is a playful, rhythmic, relaxed, interactive, flowing, and swaying movement in which the community is allowed visual and physical contact. McFee suggests that this energy pattern is accompanied by the image of a God of hope, community, and resilience. She notes that abundant decoration in vivid colors fosters the playful sense of celebration that is suited to this energy pattern. Architecturally, swing energy needs open space to move and interact, but on a small scale in order to keep focusing on the community as a place of divine revelation, or seating that focuses on people rather than on objects. The primary focus in the swing pattern is on community and laterality: people are next to each other participating in one Body.

Then follows the liturgy of the Eucharist as *circumstantes* around the central altar-table. The D-shaped altar-table is reminiscent of the oldest Last Supper depictions, following a Mediterranean custom of reclining around a small circular *stibadium* out of which a segment is cut, where servants could serve the guests.[24] During the liturgy of the Eucharist, the community at *St Gregory* uses this servant side in a theologically significant way for the presider, facing Christ, who came to serve and not be served (Lk 22:27). As such, during the whole celebration – when preaching and when at the altar-table, the presider faces the Risen Christ, Lord of the Dance. The fact that the community stands around the altar-table gives the liturgy a Paschal urgency (Ex 12:11).

24 Artistic representations of the Last Supper from the fifth to the tenth century witness to this arrangement: for instance, the sixth-century mosaic in San Apollinare Nuovo in Ravenna. There was usually more than one *stibadium* in the room, which could also be circular or square. Otto Nußbaum, *Der Standort des Liturgen am christlichen Altar vor dem Jahre 1000: Eine archäologische und liturgiegeschichtliche Untersuchung*, Theophaneia 18, 2 Vols. (Bonn: Hanstein, 1965), I, 444 ff.; Jaime Lara, "*Versus Populum* Revisited," *Worship* 68 (1994): 210–221, at 211; Uwe Michael Lang, *Turning Towards the Lord: Orientation in Liturgical Prayer* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2004), 61.

'*Open communion*' is at the center of the community's worship, architecturally made clear in the central altar-table as the first furniture that one encounters after stepping into the church, and evangelically patterned after Christ's meals with sinners.[25] The altar-table carries two inscriptions that illustrate this practice of open communion.[26] The architecture is built out of this conviction of open communion and embodies it implicitly, drawing on Jesus' own open table fellowship. Around 1980, the community of *St Gregory* (worshiping in another place) began welcoming unbaptized people to communion with the invitation "Jesus welcomes everyone to his Table, so we offer communion to everyone, and to everyone by name."[27] That is the reason why the baptismal font is relegated to the outer courtyard, and people are welcomed first by the altar-table, undefended and accessible to all. People are welcomed by a table, with all its reminiscences of banquet and meal, shared stories of sorrow and joy, a place of meeting and welcoming. The empty space around the table allows for plenty of informal and formal movements and encounters. People enter this church as they would enter a dining room, in order to be nourished in shared faith, love, and hope.

The last movement of worship again embodies *swing* energy: a final processional dance concludes the liturgy and brings the community as one Body together before departing or sharing a cup of coffee and some cake. This dance follows the same movements as depicted in the Dancing Saints fresco in the rotunda.[28] Hence, the heavenly and earthly Church are periodically reunited in one eschatological divine liturgy, embodying what it is to be God's friends in

25 Donald Schell, "The Font Outside Our Walls," *God's Friends* 12/2 (August 2001): n.p., http://www.allsaintscompany.org/resource/font-outside-our-walls [accessed January 5, 2012] He refers to Rick Fabian, "Patterning the Sacraments After Christ," *God's Friends* (March 1, 1995): n.p.

26 In Greek, one can read the accusation against Jesus: "This schmuck welcomes sinners and eats with them." On the other side is inscribed in English a text of Isaac of Nineve: "Do not distinguish between the worthy and the unworthy;/All must be equal in your eyes to love and serve./Did not the Lord share the table of publicans and harlots,/Without putting the unworthy away from him?" Schell, *Font*, n.p.

27 Ibid.

28 These uncommon saints are chosen by the community from many faith traditions and cultures as "a single statement of God's remarkable and remarkably diverse work in human life." The Dancing Saints Icon, by iconographer Mark Dukes, include Mary Magdalene, John XXIII, Elizabeth I, Malcolm X, Gandhi, Lady Godiva, and Anne Frank. They lift their left foot in a dancing pose around the altar-table. They even include a wolf, a horse, a tiger, and a bear. Donald Schell, "The Dancing Saints," *The Dancing Saints* (San Francisco: St. Gregory of Nyssa Church, 2005), 3.

one *communio sanctorum* led by the Risen Christ – the Lord of the Dance – in a blue mandorla. It is to his tune that people dance in this church, as written in a mission statement of the congregation: "St. Gregory's Church invites people to see God's image in all humankind, to sing and dance to Jesus' tune, and to become God's friends."[29] The saints are set against a night blue background in which golden stars light up. Dance is used in this *Eucharistic space* as an eschatological symbol:

> The biblical and patristic references to a New Jerusalem do not have to be restricted, architecturally speaking, to one end of a place of worship, for example, a sanctuary or chancel. There is ample evidence in history that the entire building, regardless of architectural style, can be a glorious, aesthetic expression of that imaginative kingdom of God.[30]

Ethical imagination. On Fridays, the rotunda hosts the food pantry, which distributes food to less fortunate citizens in the neighborhood (Fig. 5.5). The whole space is then transformed into the colors of abundance, fruits of the earth anticipating the eschatological banquet, through which volunteers move hastily and happily in order to serve whoever is in need. Even though this food pantry is a relatively recent development, it grew out of the worshiping community and it found a meaningful support in the church's architecture. The visitors in need go around the altar-table in the same way as the dancing saints and the community during liturgies. Numbers on the stacks and piles of food indicate the amount they are allowed to take. The food pantry, which demands careful organization, is a ritual with a Eucharistic character of giving and receiving, the meeting of broken lives around food. It is theologically significant that it occurs in the main space of the church, the Eucharistic rotunda.

Eschatological imagination. Every element in this liturgical event, even the most exotic and fanciful, such as Ethiopian crosses with cloth streamers, Indian umbrellas, African tie-dye robes, Tibetan bells, Japanese oil lamps, a Syrian bema, and a Thai howdah (elephant saddle), participates in eschatological imagination. The symbolic abundance is embedded in a strong *coherence*, which provides a mystical depth that counters superficial eclecticism: "Whatever their provenance, the symbols are contextualized by the rectors' reading of Gregory of Nyssa."[31] A clue for interpreting what at first sight appears to be an uncontrolled eclectic event hovers in the dome above the altar-table,

29 *The Dancing Saints*, back cover.

30 Vosko, *Archetypes*, 28.

31 Kieckhefer, 39.

FIGURE 5.5 St Gregory of Nyssa Episcopal Church, *San Francisco, CA* (*John Goldman, 1995*). Food pantry on Friday May 4, 2012

a maxim of Gregory of Nyssa reads: "The one thing truly worthwhile is becoming God's friend." When one steps inside this church and this community, one notices immediately that friendship with God includes friendship with one another. Such friendship mysticism is the hermeneutic key to the whole

liturgical and architectural event: the architecture merely clothes, enables, and makes room for this friendship mysticism, in which the Table has a central place. However, the Word, human and divine, receives also its due place in this congregational worship, having a place especially ordered for this purpose.

Although highly innovative and suited for a small contemporary community, the spatial dynamics of *St Gregory of Nyssa* draw on the liturgical disposition of fourth- and fifth-century Syriac Christianity, as exposed in the French Oratorian Louis Bouyer's famous *Liturgy and Architecture*.[32] In comparing the spatial disposition of synagogues, Syrian churches, Roman basilicas, and Byzantine churches, Bouyer concluded that history provides an astonishingly richness of possibilities, that should not be narrowed down to a uniform pattern. In a typical Syrian church, the *bema* with the bishop's chair and ambo would be the liturgical center of the first part of the liturgy, focusing on the proclaimed and preached Word. For the liturgy of the Eucharist, the entire assembly would follow the bishop in procession to the altar, all of them facing the liturgical and geographical East. For the entire liturgy, the bishop always remained in the midst of his people. This particular spatial dynamics moved Bouyer to plead for more liturgical *dynamism* that goes far beyond mere "processions as preludes and postludes to liturgical action,"[33] as Kieckhefer puts it so well, but engages the architectural structure in a totally different way, so that "the congregation be able to *group in different ways* and *move freely from one to the other*."[34] Practically, in order to make different communal dispositions and free transitions possible, Bouyer pleaded for *empty spaces* without pews or chairs and for creating spaces with a specific liturgical character. The study of floor plans taught Bouyer that these early synagogues and churches were built after "the gathering and shaping of a fluid community of people."[35] This point was of particular interest to the founders Fabian and Schell, when experimenting over thirty years with liturgical dispositions in four existing buildings, before designing and constructing a church especially built for this community and this liturgy. Schell poignantly observes: "Moving the altar table out from the wall or even creating a centralized, theater-in-the-round space does not provide for the people to move. *Moving the altar table was perhaps the least important change of the twentieth century, least important because it literally left*

32 Louis Bouyer, *Liturgy and Architecture* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1967) Schell, *Rending*; Kieckhefer, 40.

33 Kieckhefer, 40.

34 Bouyer, 98. My emphasis.

35 Schell, *Rending*, 163.

the people unmoved."[36] With strong conviction, I make mine this critique against a superficial implementation of a so-called conciliar reform. It is also reminiscent of Rudolf Schwarz's accusation of church architecture that embodies a monumental dynamism without putting the assembly into movement (*infra*). Bouyer had said:

> We must not confuse participating in the celebration with looking at it. The practice of looking curiously at the Eucharistic elements themselves, especially at the time of the consecration, is a practice completely unknown to Christian antiquity. [...] The concentration on seeing what the officiants do, far from having ever accompanied a real participation of all in the liturgy, has appeared as *a compensation for the lack of this participation*, and is psychologically more or less exclusive of it. [...] Either you look at somebody doing something for you, instead of you, or you do it with him. You can't do both at the same time.[37]

Enlarging the exclusive focus on seeing alone through the inclusion of the body can foster a richer understanding of liturgical participation. A last word on this church and its worship could be given to Kieckhefer, when he rightly observes:

> There is nothing timid, nothing casually tinkering or experimental in the liturgical practice here; it is radical in the thoroughness of its conception and in its historical and theological grounding. Even those who disagree with aspects of this liturgical practice cannot dismiss it out of hand but must take account of its coherence, its rationale, and its effect.[38]

Garden. Church of St François de Molitor, *Paris* (*2005*)

> Is the spiritual feeling of connectedness with an ineffable being any less powerful when the congregation, clergy and laity, worship together in a more omnidirectional or concentric architectural pattern? How does the space also say to the congregation you are the living stones, the dwelling places of God? How does a place of worship provide what people need day by day? How does God show up on the doorstep of a built environment to give comfort and hope? Is it possible that other less restrictive,

36 Ibid. My emphasis.
37 Bouyer, 58. My emphasis.
38 Kieckhefer, 41.

> non-compartmental places of worship could give off a different, more inclusive and hospitable storyline?
>
> RICHARD S. VOSKO[39]

From the hectic, noisy, and populated street, one is slowed down by the converging effect of the darker, restrained space of the *narthex*.[40] Then, the space opens up in a generously expansive and dilating movement (Fig. 5.6). Light attracts one's vision to the garden outside the celebration space, which is therefore experienced more spaciously than it actually is. The glass wall is treated in such a way that it gradually becomes opaque near the top. This treatment (*firmitas*) has the function of discouraging too impertinent peering gazes from the neighboring apartments (*utilitas*), but it also shapes the natural light into a transcendent gloom, as a cloud of glory (*venustas*), bringing to mind the cloud guiding the People of God through the desert.[41] The side tribunes above the curved sandstone walls also dilate the space, and at the same time allow flexibility in the fluctuating flow between larger and smaller congregations, without their having to face empty pews – always perceived to be emptier than empty space. Wood and sandstone paint the space in warm, soft colors, creating a pleasant, comfortable atmosphere. The ceiling is a simple wooden structure, through which some sunbeams stream on a lucky day, bringing to memory summer days in an old barn. The direct aesthetic impact is one of light and spaciousness. One is taken inside the light-bathed silence of a *domus Dei*.

This celebration space comes across as a clear and proud *communitarian* space, in which the assembly and its *participatio actuosa* (SC 14) occupy a prominent place, a Christocentric *domus ecclesiae* centered on the white marble altar-table, silent invitation to the sacrificial banquet. The simplicity

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39 Vosko, *Archetypes*, 28.

40 The design process began in 2003 and the church was consecrated on March 18, 2005. The church space is 1390 m², of which 460 m² celebration space, with 420 seating places. My presentation is based on a personal interview with Jean-Marie Duthilleul on July 1, 2010. See also *Jean-Marie Duthilleul and Étienne Tricaud: arep*, The Master Architect Series, ed. Beth Browne (Mulgrave: Images Publishing, 2008), 87–93; and http://saintfrancois-molitor.cef.fr/visite.htm and http://www.360cities.net/image/saint-francois-de-molitor#278.20,0.10,70.0 [accessed November 3, 2010]. Earlier, I discussed the liturgical and aesthetic dynamics of this church in "Ontroerend goed: Over onroerend goed dat niet onberoerd laat," in *Ruimten voor heiliging: Over liturgie, kerkgebouwen en hun interieur*, ed. Joris Geldhof, Leuvense Cahiers voor Praktische Theologie 13 (Antwerpen: Halewijn, 2011), 44–61.

41 In this phrase, I combined the three well-known Vitruvian characteristics (*firmitas, utilitas, venustas*), to show their sublime unity in this particular architectural element of the rear glass wall, which I acclaim as an architectural stroke of genius.

FIGURE 5.6 St François de Molitor, *Paris, France* (*Corinne Callies, Jean-Marie Duthilleul, 2005*). *Interior*

and clarity of this space is stunning.[42] The curved pews all gather around this altar-table as their *centering focus*. The two sandstone walls contribute to the elliptic shape, like two slender parentheses or two open hands, emphasizing and embracing their sacred heart: these sculptural elements caress the otherwise box-like space into character, materializing this local Church, even when no assembly is physically present.

From ancient times, the altar-table has been a symbol for Christ (Hb 7–9). Christ is in the midst of those who gather in his name (Mt 18:20). The simplicity, nobility, and solidity of this white cube of Carrara marble in the center of the building inspire awe. It radiates like a glowing light at the heart of the space, giving meaning to its architectural and liturgical surroundings. Rather like a breathing 'sacred heart', it inspires and expires, gathering in and sending out (Mk 3:13–14). The central prominence of the altar-table configures the assembly into the *Body of Christ* (1 Cor 10:14–30; LG 3). Resting on just one simple step, the altar-table is given due prominence and respect. Nonetheless, this luminous center is situated at the lowest level of the whole church, *at its most kenotic point*.[43] Its centrality has been criticized as rigidly christomonist, unable to be open to a Trinitarian architectural theology.[44] In what follows, I will highlight that a Christological determination does not impede a Trinitarian framework, as Christoph Schwöbel suggested for eschatology.

42 The church's ornamental and narrative minimalism may disappoint people more familiar with rich iconography. There are only three polychrome statues, relegated to the corners; the multiple crosses are too abstract and undifferentiated to be prayerful, naked and faceless as mathematical signs only addressed to the rational mind. The architectural symbolism is more three-dimensional than two-dimensional. The most colorful symbol of this celebrative space is therefore perhaps the *assembly* itself, in which people are aware of one another, without having to look with discomfort 'into' each other, enhancing an unhealthy anthropocentrism. In case there is any doubt, the term 'color' in this phrase depends less on multiculturalism than on the latest clothing fashion in this generally white and affluent Parisian neighborhood.

43 I would suggest connecting this with the place that Ignatius of Loyola gives to Christ in his vision of the two standards. Whereas Lucifer is enthroned on a cathedra, Christ is situated "in a humble place" (SpEx 144). It is also suggestive that for Gregory of Nyssa, kenosis was a stronger proof of divine omnipotence than miracles. See Gregory of Nyssa, *Catechetical Oration*, 24, 2.

44 Franco Magnani and Massimiliano Valdinoci, "Nuove realizzazioni: Esempi internazionali. Analisi liturgica e architettonica," *Spazio liturgico e orientamento: Atti del IV Convegno liturgico internazionale, Bose, 1–3 giugno 2006*, ed. Goffredo Boselli (Magnano: Qiqajon, 2007), 37–60, at 55. Indeed, the authors overlook the church's Trinitarian symbolism, especially the potential role of the luminous garden for the liturgical event within the church space.

The altar-table is the center of a *sacred* axis, including baptismal font, altar-table, ambo, cross of glory, and luminous garden (Fig. 5.6).[45] Remarkably, there is no cathedra on this central axis. Priests step aside to let Christ be in the center, in his *fourfold* liturgical presence as presider, elements, Word, and assembly (SC 7). Two pews *in darker wood* surrounding the altar-table materialize the 'subtle' distinction between the common and ministerial priesthood (LG 10). This minimal intervention has been criticized as "weak and evanescent,"[46] but instead one should welcome this solution, for it shows that no radical separation, no majestic thrones, and no excluding communion rails are needed to underline a distinction without confusion in the Body of Christ. The priests are sitting amidst the rest of the congregation, as Louis Bouyer suggested.[47] He warned against giving prominence to the presider and adding a fourth focus to the three essential foci of the liturgy: altar-table, ambo, and the eschatological orientation to the *parousia*. Richard S. Vosko has argued:

> When hierarchy is a necessary component of a religion's polity, the status of clergy is not diminished or denounced when the president of the liturgical community sits with, stands with, and kneels with the rest of the congregation.[48]

In this church, the traditional and perhaps familiar division of nave and sanctuary is inverted, as the sanctuary becomes the significant *sacred heart* of the nave *and* the precise *sacred way* going from Baptism over the Eucharist to Cross and Garden. This axis is sacred ground and sacred history: indeed, during a funeral, the coffin is placed on this central axis between baptistery and altar-table, as legitimate part of our history of salvation. This sacred line *topographically* writes meaning onto and into the universe. Contrary to a defensive, closed-off sacredness, the sanctuary is an open, free-breathing space in the midst of the church, a reminder of the Holy in the midst of God's people (Hos 11:9). In terms of Maximus,

45 From the altar-table there starts another invisible, smaller axis, perpendicular to the central axis, and leading to the smaller chapel of the Blessed Sacrament literally *oriented* to the geographical East. There are three door spaces, the middle one simply framed in gold, suggesting a subtle Trinitarian reading of these apertures.

46 Magnani and Valdinoci, 55. The authors suggest elevating the presidency "to ensure specific symbolic value." In my view however, Molitor offers a very *strong* theological argument faithful to the Chalcedonian distinction without separation, union without confusion.

47 Bouyer, 81.

48 Vosko, *Archetypes*, 27–28.

the sanctuary enlightens and enlivens the nave, as the spirit of the body. Its empty waiting space gives the body leeway to 'dance'.

Although its prominence has been criticized,[49] the modest *baptismal font* in Carrara marble at the entrance of the celebration space reminds that it is Baptism by which one enters the Church. At the same time, it *converts* the visitors' steps, for the first time since leaving the street, and it *prevents* them from stepping into the sanctuary, diverting visitors towards the sides. The Paschal candle is integrated to this font, symbolizing Christ's presence as Light in his Church.

The modest white *ambo* in Carrara marble is placed against the glass wall. This frontal position rightly represents the Divine "Otherness" of the Word, not coming from the center of the community, but from afar.[50] The Belgian liturgist, Paul De Clerck (°1939), proposed that the ambo should be placed next to the baptistery at the entrance of the church, so that it could be used also during baptisms. However, the distance here between baptistery and ambo is no obstacle in this relatively small church. The proclamation of the Word from the ambo also incorporates the altar-table as symbol within the baptismal liturgy, and enlarges the baptismal space beyond the confines of the baptistery alone. The whole space, garden included, becomes as such baptismal. De Clerck would also prefer to focus simply on two poles in the ellipse (altar-table and ambo), placing the altar-table in front of the glass wall. But then, the sacramental richness of the single axis, which includes Baptism, is reduced, and the symbolism of the back lighting for the ambo is lost; and the presider would be really turning his back to the people when facing the luminous garden at the altar-table. De Clerck's suggestion that the priest should turn towards the light during Advent is much more appropriate when the altar-table is situated in the center.[51]

The huge and slender golden *cross of glory*, flanked by six candles, functions as an interpretative key for the spaces in front and beyond. The absence of a

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49 Magnani and Valdinoci, 53–55. Their major critique against its prominence as a disturbing "ostinato continuo" is unconvincing. Instead of analyzing only *conceived space* as it is petrified on plans and photographs – what the authors admit – in the *spatial practice* of *a Eucharistic celebration*, the baptismal font is a modest piece of furniture. Instead of only two focal points (altar and ambo), it is a strong theological argument to enter the church through and to be reminded every time of baptism, embodied in the same white marble as altar and ambo.

50 Reinhard Messner, "La direzione della preghiera: L'altare e il centro eccentrico dell'assemblea," in *L'altare: Mistero di presenza opera dell'arte. Atti del II Convegno liturgico internazionale, Bose, 31 ottobre-2 novembre 2003*, ed. Goffredo Boselli (Magnano: Qiqajon, 2005), 204.

51 Paul De Clerck, "L'ambone oggi: le principali acquisizioni del convegno," in *L'ambone: Tavola della parola di Dio. Atti del III Convegno liturgico internazionale, Bose, 2–4 giugno 2005*, ed. Goffredo Boselli (Bose: Qiqajon, 2006), 265–266.

FIGURE 5.7 St François de Molitor*, Paris, France* (*Corinne Callies, Jean-Marie Duthilleul, 2005*). Eucharistic celebration of Pentecost on June 12, 2011

figure on the cross and its gold color suggests that it is an eschatological cross of glory, a victorious sign of the *Sol Victor*, pointing to the liturgical east. This cross corresponds well with Joseph Ratzinger's description of it as "open iconostasis," although he proposed that it be placed on the altar-table.[52]

Last but not least, the *garden* is situated at the end of the central axis, and has in my view an essential, particularly eschatological and cosmological, role in the church's theological *topodrama* (Fig. 5.7). Although the translucency of the rear wall has been criticized as impeding intimacy,[53] I believe that this luminous garden is the protagonist in transfiguring this particular *domus ecclesiae* into a true *domus Dei* (SC 124), expanding its Christocentric note with a Trinitarian chord, and broadening its anthropocentric melody into a cosmological harmony. First, it is a symbol of the *already but not yet*: visually near, but

52 Joseph Ratzinger, "Eastward- or Westward-Facing Position? A Correction," in *The Feast of Faith: Approaches to a Theology of the Liturgy*, trans. Graham Harrison (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1986), 139–145, at 145.

53 Magnani and Valdinoci, 53. Although recognizing the value of the glass rear wall in opening the ellipse beyond its tendency to be self-enclosed, the authors are particularly harsh in their critiques of this church, missing the point of the symbolic depth of the luminous garden to such an extent that one wonders if they have ever visited the place – what they themselves eventually admit.

physically distant, for the glass does not allow one to pass through, and underlines a subtle eschatological tension between here and there. Second, it is a *city garden*, an appropriate eschatological symbol for the Kingdom of God and the heavenly Jerusalem.[54] Third, the cross is the symbol of a *tree of life*, on the threshold between the celebration space and the garden, uniting our origins and our hope in one sublime anamnetic and proleptic vision. This sight can serve as a reminder not only of the *biblical* gardens – of Eden, of the Song of Songs, of the Agony, of the Resurrection, and of the Heavenly Paradise – but also of the *architectural* realizations of the last century that are open to nature, especially those of the Sirens and Tadao Ando.[55] Along the lines of the biblical gardens, this garden can be seen as the garden of *desire* and *encounter* – and disencounter, as in the case of Eden. In the garden of the Song of Songs, the desire for the Beloved is deepened. In the garden of the Agony, Jesus Christ expresses his and our hope and despair. In the garden of the Resurrection, Mary of Magdala goes to encounter her Beloved. It its polysemantic depth, this *hortus conclusus* opens, transfigures, and dilates the liturgical space. The background of a luminous city garden can indeed enrich the reception of the Word proclaimed during the course of a liturgical year.

Horizontally, the principal axis opens towards the luminous garden. During the Eucharist, the presider stands with his back to the light. In theory, he could also stand at the other side, facing the light. In that way, light, cross, and garden would be given more theological and eschatological weight, as an architectural expression of the *parousia*, holding open a ring tempted to close in on itself.[56]

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54 A preference for a garden instead of a city as the eschatological image of the Kingdom of God can be found in Alejandro R. García-Rivera, *The Garden of God: A Theological Cosmology* (Collegeville, MN: Fortress Press, 2009). Also Louis Bouyer pleaded for eschatological and cosmological orientation in Bouyer, 84.

55 See for instance, Heikki and Kaija Siren's *Technical University Chapel* in Otaniemi, Finland (1956); Tadao Ando's *Church on the Water* in Hokkaido, Japan (1988); the chapel of the trappistine Redwood Monastery in California; the chapel of the Jesuit retreat house in La Baume, Aix-en-Provence, France; James Burlage and David Arkin's *Mary, Star of the Sea* Roman Catholic Church in Gualala, California (1995); and João Luis Carrilho da Graça's *San Antonio* Roman Catholic parish church in Portalegre, Portugal (2008).

56 Magnani and Valdinoci, 55 found the actual solution, where the presider turns his back to the luminous garden, weak, antinomical, and disoriented. It indeed counters the *ad orientem* during the Eucharistic prayer, which comes to the fore well during the *Introductory rites*. The contrast with the communal gathering around the altar as Christocentric focus also has *theotopical* value, which must not be overlooked. If the entire liturgy were to be oriented towards the garden, something may indeed get lost. A flexible, creative, and

The community could 'play' flexibly with the liturgical year: especially during Advent for instance, the presider could face the light to emphasize the eschatological expectation of the Lord.[57]

Now we arrive at the point where we can truly speak of communitarian *appropriation*, that is, where in the dialogue between community and architecture, a particular inculturation of the universal liturgy is born. During the penitential rite (Fig. 5.11), the whole assembly, people and presider, turn together towards the liturgical East of the garden, literally *versus crucem* and *versus lucem*, in the suggestive terminology of the German liturgist Albert Gerhards (°1951) (*infra*). One may add *versus hortum* or *versus paradisum*. The assembly is *standing*, in embodied symbolism of eschatological hope in the Resurrection. As such, a simple turn of the body is the physical expression of the Spirit of the Risen Lord who prays: *Abba*, Father (Rm 8:15). This embodied theology configures the assembly into one *People of God* before one Lord (Rm 11:2; LG 2).

All members of the congregation are oriented towards their *Sol Victor*, in their shared penitential and doxological act of imploring mercy and giving glory: this is precisely Jungmann's theological argument for a common direction (*infra*). Both *doxological* and *sacrificial* dimensions are essential, especially at a time when there is an unfortunate tendency to emphasize the *ad orientem* posture only for its supposed sacrificial character. Orientation in this sense is a way of accounting for our hope spatially and bodily (cf. 1 Pe 3:15). This bodily turn is theologically more relevant than a mere geographical orientation of the building, so in vogue in some circles today, but which as 'architectural happening' reduces the assembly to a mere observers' role, instead of leading them into movement, as the German architect Rudolf Schwarz observed.[58]

In conclusion, during the penitential rite and the liturgy of the Word, the gathered community is configured into one *People of God* oriented towards the transcendent Mystery. The same community is configured into one *Body of Christ* by gathering around the Incarnate Word as their nourishing center, calling near and sending out, on the musical beat of a sacred heart. These are the two main movements of Molitor's spatial dynamics. Nonetheless, all the liturgical movements are movements directed *towards* the Father, *through* Christ,

playful dynamism must be sought at all times, in humble awareness of architecture's permanent 'failure', as Schwarz emphasized.

57 This suggestion has been given by De Clerck, *Ambone*, 265–266.

58 Rudolf Schwarz, *The Church Incarnate: The Sacred Function of Christian Architecture*, trans. Cynthia Harris (Chicago: H. Regnery Co., 1958), 61.

in the Spirit.[59] Therefore, last but not least, to complete the Trinitarian ecclesiology, we must also consider the community as *Temple of the Spirit* (1 Cor 3:16–17; LG 4). Rudolf Schwarz had stated:

> Church architecture is not Christ-centered but Trinitarian: *here* is the dwelling place of the Spirit, who animates everything and lets the world blossom to the fullness of its beauty; *there* is the threshold, the place of the Lord, who is with his people and yet gone to the Father; and *beyond* are the spaces of eternity.[60]

If the garden indicates the unreachable space of the Father, the altar-table and the cross the threshold of Christ, the whole church is the Temple of the Spirit. The Spirit is the space of *encounter* between persons, human and divine. The Spirit inhabits places only insofar she inhabits persons. By inhabiting, she creates space, expanding, dilating, as a skilful yogi stretching existing space towards unimagined cosmological, ethical, and eschatological horizons. The *Spiritus creator* creates possibilities, giving existing potential unseen depths. The Spirit is metaphorical space in the way that she *creates space for the other*. In taking space the Spirit does not take space for herself, that is to say, in inhabiting a place she creates living space, bringing space to life, making living space possible. As such, she gives space to the loving encounter of Father and Son. In other words, in the space of the Spirit, one becomes truly oneself. The point of entering a *Temple of the Spirit* is to become a *Temple of the Spirit* oneself. The Spirit has to do with the *local*, because she has to do with place (*locus*). Spirit does not separate us from the particular, but enables us to bring to light its universal depths. Whereas the former two ecclesiological metaphors orient and center, this third one expands. Its matter is no longer an *aural* direction as in a *People of God*-orientation, nor a *visual* center as in the *Body of Christ*-transubstantiation, but an *embodied* expansion, and thus the most architectural of all.

59 Ratzinger, *Eastward*, 140.

60 “Der Kirchenbau ist nicht christozentrisch, sondern trinitarisch, hier der Wohnort des Geistes, der alles belebt und die Welt zu ihrer Schönheit erblühen läßt, dahinter die Schwelle, der Ort des Herrn, der bei den Seinen ist und doch fortging zum Vater, und dahinter die Räume der Ewigkeit.” Rudolf Schwarz, *Kirchenbau: Welt vor der Schwelle* (Heidelberg: F.H. Kerle Verlag, 1960), 29.

Versus Orientem? Architecture and Eschatology

> From the whole of humanity God chooses the Eucharistic community, and from the whole of the rest of creation this bread and this wine, in order to show forth his purpose for the whole universe. [...] The Eucharistic celebration does not leave the world unchanged. [...] The kingdom of God has come closer with each Eucharistic celebration.
>
> GEOFFREY WAINWRIGHT[61]

It is fascinating to see what church architects today do with their rear walls, consciously or unconsciously 'topo-writing' eschatological statements. In the *Cathedral of Los Angeles* (2002), Jose Rafael Moneo brings down a huge translucent glorious cross-window (Fig. 4.11), which lifts the eyes upwards. In his *Jubilee Church* in Rome (2003), Richard Meier presents a fascinating choreography of candid white volumes painted in light behind a simple wooden crucifix (Fig. 2.8). In the *Cathedral of Oakland* (2008), Craig Hartman invites a borrowed and amplified Christ Judge and Savior to bring to mind our eschatological hope (Fig. 4.1). In the Cathedral of Évry (Fig. 1.6) and in *Notre-Dame de Pentecôte* in Paris, the translucent rear window evokes the cross as tree of life (Fig. 5.8). In *Notre-Dame d'Espérance* in Paris, the sanctuary cross, lit from above, is broken open permanently: three golden squares suggest the horizontal beam (Fig. 5.9). In *St Peter* in Wenzenbach, the whole sanctuary is lit up in deep blue light (Fig. 3.9). In *St Nikolaus* in München-Neuried, a corner skylight englobes everything in pure white light (Fig. 4.14). The stairway in *St Theodor* in Köln-Vingst climbs up towards the light (Fig. 1.7). In *Herz Jesu* in München-Neuhausen (Fig. 1.3) and *St Luc* in Paris (Fig. 5.13), huge metallic curtains hang from the ceiling. In *St Florian* in München-Riem, an explosion of gold and light engages the eschatological imagination (Fig. 4.13). Schwarz's *Fronleichnamkirche* displays simply an entirely white wall (Fig. 2.1). What do these sanctuary walls mean? Do they give some eschatological glimpse on the Kingdom, opening a virtual, eternal space in the midst of our world, providing as such a renewed experience of the universe?

The Austrian Jesuit liturgical scholar Josef Andreas Jungmann (1889–1975) recounts that from the eleventh century onwards, paintings and retables were added behind the altar-table, which leads to massive ornamental structures "in which the *mensa* or table often seems to sink into the insignificance of a mere appendage." Content-wise, "all of Christian iconography was brought into play,"

61 Wainwright, 185–186.

FIGURE 5.8 Notre-Dame de Pentecôte*, Paris-La Défense, France* (*Franck Hammoutène, 2000*)

FIGURE 5.9 Notre-Dame d'Espérance*, Paris XIe, France* (*Bruno Legrand, 1997*)

although the mystery of Redemption as such was seldom depicted. What was completely forgotten was the idea "that a picture over the altar is not a pictorial record of the past but primarily an instrument for professing our Catholic faith and acknowledging our Christian hope."[62]

This final section is written out of the conviction that eschatology should be given more thought and expression in contemporary church architecture. More than static imagery, eschatology is the liturgical dynamism of the space itself, with its thresholds, boundaries, directions, and orientations – or, adventures, possibilities, challenges, and discoveries. My intention is to provide some enrichment for both eschatology and architecture through their interplay. Church architecture can provide eschatology with spatial embodiment, because eschatology considers not only the *now and then*, but also the *here and there*. Both case studies of this chapter have demonstrated how worshiping communities play along with their architecture in order to embody this vision of the Kingdom: through dance and orientation they celebrate at the same time the Eucharist (dance) and the world (garden).

This section, parallel to the former chapters, will have two parts. First, it will be useful to explore once again the visionary theory of German architect Rudolf Schwarz (1897–1961), whose eschatological visions were intrinsically Trinitarian and Eucharistic. Then, I will define *Eucharistic space* as "oriented communion," drawing on the thought of German liturgist Albert Gerhards (1951).

Dance. Body-Building

> The liturgy does not need the church building.
>
> These things are not meant to serve the liturgy but to be liturgy, albeit in a modest way. They are real things that man brings in, human work.
>
> RUDOLF SCHWARZ[63]

The liturgical event is more important than the building surrounding it, but the building is meant to become liturgical event: this conviction is at the core

62 Josef Andreas Jungmann, *The Mass of the Roman Rite: Its Origins and Development* (*Missarum Sollemnia*) (London: Burns & Oates, 1959), 184.

63 "Die Liturgie braucht den Kirchenbau nicht." Rudolf Schwarz, *Kirchenbau: Welt vor der Schwelle* (Heidelberg: Kerle, 1960), 43. Henceforth, KB; "Diese Dinge haben keiner Liturgie zu dienen, sondern Liturgie zu sein, wenn auch in einer bescheidenen Weise, sie sind wirkliche Dinge, die man darbringt, Menschenwerk." *Vom Bau der Kirche* (Würzburg: Werkbundverlag, 1938), 135 [*The Church Incarnate: The Sacred Function of Christian Architecture*, trans. Cynthia Harris (Chicago: H. Regnery Co., 1958). Henceforth, CI].

of the work of German architect Rudolf Schwarz (1897–1961).[64] His most famous book, *Vom Bau der Kirche* (*The Church Incarnate*)[65] has been characterized as "one of the most dangerous books ever written about church-building" because it presents seven 'plans' that could be read as mere blueprints.[66] However, instead of blueprints, these plans are rather configurations of the community and complementary 'events' of *a growing process*.[67] Schwarz understands works of architecture as "communal forms": "The individual cannot understand them as long as he is alone. [...] Only out of the community can they be understood."[68]

64 Schwarz's most famous church is certainly his acclaimed and despised *Fronleichnamskirche* at Aachen (1930) (Fig. 2.1). Due to the overall white for walls and ceiling, high windows, and black floor, the aesthetic impact of this rectangular block (159x68x69) is one of pure luminosity – a Modernist aesthetic of mysterious stillness, which can be encountered more recently in Álvaro Siza's *Santa Maria* in Marco de Canavezes, Portugal (1994–1997) and John Pawson's abbey church at Novy Dvur, Czech Republic (2004) (Figs. 6.1 and 6.2). Due to its formal minimalism, any sculptural element, such as a small cross on the altar, receives an extraordinary density of presence. Although it is a longitudinal space, Schwarz understood it more as a contemplative *open ring*. Early on, this church encountered a lot of criticism, to which Romano Guardini reacted in defense of the church. For an account of Guardini and Schwarz's mutual influence, see Frédéric Debuyst, *L'entrée en liturgie: introduction à l'oeuvre liturgique de Romano Guardini* (Paris: Cerf, 2008).

65 In this section, I have limited myself to *Vom Bau der Kirche*, *Kirchenbau*, and "Eucharistischer Bau," the address delivered at Liturgical Arts Conference Munich and published in *Das Münster* (1960) ["'The Eucharistic Building'," trans. V. Hoecke, *Faith and Form* 2 (1969): 20–23. Henceforth, EB]. Further reading: Rudolf Stegers, *Räume der Wandlung, Wände und Wege: Studien zum Werk von Rudolf Schwarz* (Wiesbaden: Vieweg, 2000).

66 Frédéric Debuyst, *Modern Architecture and Christian Celebration* (London: Lutterworth, 1968), 45–46. Even though one of the most extensive recent discussions of Schwarz's thought in English contains the same warning, Kieckhefer tends to reduce Schwarz's plans to two 'models', namely the Ring and the Way, although Schwarz himself warned against separating these 'extreme forms' from their organic whole. See CI 219–227 and Richard Kieckhefer, *Theology in Stone: Church Architecture from Byzantium to Berkeley* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 229–264. Another original account in English is Gilbert Sunghera, "The Shifting Location of Transcendence in Church Architecture: How Rudolf Schwarz Can Once Again Influence the Modern Debate of Church Design, as Illustrated in the Shifting Language of *Environment and Art in Catholic Worship* (1978) and *Built of Living Stones* (2000)," unpublished master thesis, School of Architecture, Yale University, 2005.

67 The seventh plan, "The Cathedral of All Times," is the dynamic and organic combination (over time) of the six former plans.

68 CI 53; 11–21. Schwarz's favorite metaphors for church building are the hand, the eye, and the chalice that remain open to receive from God.

Central to Schwarz's *theotopy*[69] is the altar-table as the Christocentric heart of the gathered Body of Christ.[70] Essential to understand the plans is Schwarz's introduction centered on the body:

> The body is not ultimately bound to any form at all but is extraordinarily free. The world is filled with a *great dialogue* which passes back and forth between thing and thing, between form and form. The body is drawn into this *great flow of speech*. It is open to every invocation which comes to it from the forms and it replies to them with clear forms of its own, forms which it assumes for the moment and then relinquishes once more.[71]

This is an essential comment for my understanding of the seven plans as *organic* events. As free and communicative as a body, each of Schwarz's plans is one 'sacred interpretation' of the Body of Christ. Church architecture must make the Body of Christ visible or tangible in multiple ways:

> It is *with the body that we experience building*, with the outstretched arms and the pacing feet, with the roving glance and with the ear, and above all else in breathing. Space is *dancingly* experienced. But the surroundings (*Umraum*) are the inversion (*Umkehr*) of the dance: that space inside of which the dance extends itself, that space which stands ready for the body, is not, as is usually assumed, the *outward radiating* (*Ausstrahlung*) of the body but rather its *inverted space* – the body's space turned inside out and projected into the outer world.[72]

It is remarkable that, in another context, the French phenomenologist Jean-Yves Lacoste also uses dance as metaphor for the relationship between topology and liturgy: "Just as liturgical architecture opens up a space in the world or on the earth in or on which one cannot dwell appropriately without carefully bracketing the historial rules of location, the liturgical 'dance' transgresses

69 He does not write a theological treatise but rather presents what I have called a *theotopy*: "Schwarz does not teach an architectural style but a method of relating religious faith to the act of architecture." John W. Dixon Jr., "The Iconic Architecture of Rudolf Schwarz: An Essay on Architectural and Theological Method," *The Christian Scholar* 47 (1964): 280–294. A recent study on the theological aspects of Schwarz's architecture is Walter Zahner, *Rudolf Schwarz Baumeister der neuen Gemeinde: Ein Beitrag zum Gespräch zwischen Liturgietheologie und Architektur in der liturgischen Bewegung* (Altenberge: Oros, 1992).

70 CI 3.

71 CI 7, 22.

72 CI 27. My emphasis.

these same rules."[73] Body and building are intimately related as in a liturgical 'dance': "The body symbolically allows worldly or earthly logic to take leave of its inscription in place. [...] The liturgical 'dance' forces us to relate the question of God [...] to the question of the body."[74] Hence, we can only understand Schwarz's plans well when seeing them as organic configurations of one body, the ecclesial Body of Christ.

The ring. Schwarz's first plan is a simple *ring* around Christ:

> At first the congregation gathers in the ring. In reality, however, it is the Lord who unites the people so. Then, through their eyes and speech the people surrender themselves into the center. Under the image of the dark star they renounce the world and make it flow back to its origin. But what then takes place upon the altar is not poetic mysticism: it is Christian sacrifice. The former reaches the innermost point of this world, only to be the more her captive; the latter quits this world to enter the eternal.[75]

Any 'abbreviation' would oppose people and presider in the current-day all too familiar 'face-to-face'-form of "discourse" that "consummates the world" instead of presenting it to God.[76] Hence, this spatial dynamics of "sacred inwardness" is in constant danger of becoming "the most desolate of all forms," a self-enclosed circle without transcendence. Therefore, "the closed form is

73 "Place cannot be thought independently of the body. [...] Our relation to the divine Absolute also engages our bodies." Even though Lacoste acknowledges that dance is not always explicitly present in our liturgies, our gestures and postures engage our bodies and thus dance is something more than 'mere' metaphor (as if such a thing would be possible). Jean-Yves Lacoste, *Experience and the Absolute: Disputed Questions on the Humanity of Man*, trans. Mark Raftery-Skehan, ed. John D. Caputo, Perspectives in Continental Philosophy 40 (New York: Fordham, 2004), 37.

74 Ibid., 38.

75 CI 55. It is *theotopically* relevant that Schwarz does not begin his primer for church building with the most familiar of all church types: the *basilica*. At the basis of his *theotopy* is a spatial configuration of a community, not a transmitted canon. The 'dark star' is an inverted star, in which the rays are centripetal. All references in this section, unless stated otherwise, are taken from "The First Plan: Sacred Inwardness: The Ring," CI 35–66.

76 His solution is *theological*, namely acknowledging the altar as "a center which opens into the infinite." CI 64–65. At the end of his life, Schwarz would have said: "Der Priester hinter dem Altar bringt den ganzen Kirchengrundriß in Verwirrung." Stegers, *Räume*, 179. I understand this dismissal of the *versus populum* not as a general norm but as referring to the reform of his existing buildings, because it ruins the spatial dynamics intended in his architecture. A good illustration of this is his *Fronleichnamskirche* after the placement of a second altar.

lasting only as long as it remains open," because "where the earth ends, God's heaven begins."[77] This has *cosmological* repercussions: the Christocentric altar-table sheds new light on the whole *universe*.[78] At the Eucharist, the whole universe is taken into the intratrinitarian perichoresis. The problem is to express this openness in architecture. In a grandiose Trinitarian vision, Schwarz places the worshiping community in the "dwelling place of the Spirit" between the Father and the Son:

> Dark and remote God's providence arches, and in the innermost center it gives birth to the radiant child. Where the child's light streams out into the darkness, sacred earth is born. What lies between – people, land and universe – is *embedded in the Father's movement to the child and in the reflux of thanks*. So perhaps the profoundest meaning of this plan is that it takes the people up into the sacred river of eternity, into the river which bears them from the Father to the Son and back once more, a new race.[79]

The static form of the closed ring can only be understood when dynamically *enacted* by a local community, which remains eschatologically *open* in its center. Therefore, more than a static 'model' to be imitated, Schwarz presents the spatial dynamics of "sacred inwardness" *inherent to any church*.

Schwarz struggled to express *architecturally* in a dynamic way the congregation's changing *theological* relationship – with the *immanent* God born as new light in their midst and the *transcendent* God as a hovering dark vault of ceaseless creation. In one of his projects, he attempts this by varying the light during a celebration, changing the focus from altar-table to vault.[80] The reason why he finally rejects this is interesting: because it "prevents the people from carrying out the movement themselves," reducing them to the role of passive observers "before an architectural happening." Therefore, in Schwarz' view, church architecture is alive – *lived space* – when *putting people into movement*. A building is not something to look at, but to be performed in liturgical action:

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77 CI 57, 55.

78 CI 56–57.

79 CI 59. My emphasis. Although today we would perhaps shudder at the idea of always being looked at – spontaneously, we might think of the huge open eye in Schwarz's *Heilig Kreuz-Kirche* at Bottrop (1953–1957) – Schwarz's anthropomorphic image of God's hand and eye is embedded in God's utterly good mercy and providence. God's watching is ceaselessly creative, recognizing the good that is there. See also EB 20–23.

80 "With the help of the light, the space could in a sense be created ever anew out of nothing and could be made to ebb and flow together with the act of worship." CI 61.

> In doing all this, in merely entering the room, in going forward to the center, *in simply standing*, then in raising his eyes and beginning to speak or to move his hands in one of the acts of worship – in all this he would constantly *mark out a particular direction and continue a way*, and by means of this way he would intersect the round form. For he could do all this only as that which he is, a human creature who has a life story, an origin and a destination and who is sent on the way from the one to the other, knowing that this way leads from God to God and that therefore it is "sacred way." It is given to the human body to go this way. This is indeed the body's spiritual meaning and the meaning of its facing into the remote distance.[81]

In the liturgical enactment of the space, the static and closed form of the ring opens in two directions: *vertically*, "in simply standing," and *horizontally*, in marking out "a particular direction." These are the two movements in which Schwarz naturally opens the ring in the next two plans.

Recapitulating, with the ring, Schwarz provides the inner spatial dynamics of sacred inwardness belonging to any church building. This dynamic can only be understood when enacted liturgically by a gathered community. Schwarz pointed out its two main perversions, namely an abbreviated opposition between presider and people, and a self-centeredness that would blur its eschatological depth. Aware of the difficulty to express this sacred inwardness adequately in architecture, Schwarz deepens this form in the next two plans, considering the ring as but one particular, albeit essential, dimension of liturgical architecture. Again, rather than providing *the exact blueprint* for a church building, the ring expresses but *one momentary form* of liturgical dynamics, which can only be understood within the organic whole of the body.[82]

This *ring* is easy to recognize in both case studies of this chapter: both in *St François de Molitor* (Fig. 5.7) and *St Gregory of Nyssa* (Figs. 5.2 and 5.5), the altar-table is centrally placed. The dynamism of both liturgies demonstrates that the *ring* is not a static, closed form. The ring is broken into an *open ring* in

81 CI 65.

82 Craig Hartman explains that his *Cathedral of Christ the Light* in Oakland was inspired by Schwarz's *ring*-form in order to "create a sense of community and inclusion." One wonders, however, how much richer this building would have been if all of Schwarz's seven plans would have been taken into account. See Craig Hartman, "Light and Shadow: Civic Space, Sacred Space, and the Cathedral of Christ the Light," *Faith and Form* 42/1 (2009); http://www.faithandform.com/features/42_1_hartman/ index.php [accessed February 27, 2012].

FIGURE 5.10 Ring. St Paulus (Katholische Gemeinde Deutscher Sprache)*, Brussels, Belgium* (*Catherine De Bie, Florence Cosse, Leo Zogmayer, 2001*). Sunday Eucharist on February 24, 2013

St François de Molitor during the penitential rites (Fig. 5.11), and in *St Gregory of Nyssa* by the different movements around the altar-table and towards the oblong space for the Liturgy of the Word (Figs. 5.3–5.5). Many contemporary churches are conceived as *ring*: *Christus Hoffnung der Welt* in Wien-Donaucity (Fig. 5.1), *St Paulus* in Brussels (Fig. 5.10), and *Christ the Light Cathedral* in Oakland (Fig. 4.8), to name only a few. It is important to notice, with Schwarz, that the presider *closes* the *ring* when he occupies the open space behind the altar-table. The elliptic *Communio-Räume* in Germany, for example Schwarz's *St Albertus Magnus* in Andernach (Rudolf Schwarz 1954; *Communio-Raum*: Maria Schwarz, Johannes Krämer, Albert Gerhards, 2002)[83] (Fig. 2.10), are already a dynamic interpretation of the *ring*, because at the center is not the altar-table but a sacred emptiness between the two liturgical foci of ambo (table of the Word) and altar-table (table of the Eucharist).

83 See *Communio-Räume: Auf der Suche nach der angemessenen Raumgestalt katholischer Liturgie*, ed. Albert Gerhards, Thomas Sternberg, and Walter Zahner, Bild-Raum-Feier: Studien zu Kirche und Kunst 2 (Regensburg: Schnell & Steiner, 2003).

FIGURE 5.11 Open Ring. St François de Molitor*, Paris, France* (*Corinne Callies, Jean-Marie Duthilleul, 2005*). Kyrie-Gloria during the feast of Pentecost on June 12, 2011

The open ring. Born organically out of the *ring*, which is lasting "as long as it remains open," the *open ring* is Schwarz's plan for the "average situation," centered on a dramatic Last Supper scene rather than on the idyl of a baby in a manger.[84] This plan is a first application of Schwarz's ongoing struggle to represent the altar-table as the open, luminous center of the ring, which again has cosmological repercussions: "The hidden openness of the world's center has become visible."[85] The open ring is a "bleeding" form:

> Wherever the earthly form *breaks off prematurely*, God begins; it shows that it is *a good and lucid power* which prevents the fulfillment of the earth's meaning, that it was through God that the earth was wounded, and that it is the open place in the binding rings which is the sacred place;

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84 All the references in this section are taken from "The Second Plan. Sacred Parting: The Open Ring," CI 67–94, unless stated otherwise. Schwarz did not consider this form in a *versus populum* celebration, but faithful to preconciliar theology, one where the priest faces the Orient in the same way as the people surrounding him. An open ring *versus populum* has been created recently in the Parisian church of *St François de Molitor*, (Fig. 5.11).

85 CI 74.

> and finally, it shows that *all things are made perfect in God*, that in him all things are redeemed, that it is he who makes the earth whole. This plan makes it clear that when emptiness breaks into a thing, God is near, for *this invasion of emptiness is not meaningless annihilation*: it is the beginning of growth into the light."[86]

Hence, the theological depth of sacred emptiness – for Schwarz synonymous with "resplendent abundance" – is threefold: it points out the *limitation* of humanity to reach salvation by its own effort, which is *felicitous*, because it is precisely there that God is to be found, who alone can fulfill the earth. Sacred emptiness embodies simultaneously human limitation and divine fulfillment.[87]

The altar-table, symbol for Christ, is still situated in the *center* of the gathering, but due to the open gap in the ring expresses better its being also *threshold* between heaven and earth, between the realms of the Spirit and of the Father: "The ring of people at the table is in a sense closed and the Lord is truly within it; but at the same time, out of the heart of the Lord, it is opened wide to the Father." All are oriented towards the light. The main difference with the *ring* is that the altar-table is no longer a *star* or source of light, but an *open star*, answer to the light, the place where light is handed on, and which is complete only in the sun. The empty side in the ring "is also Christ's empty seat at the table of this world. The death of the Lord and his going forth are the wound where history bleeds. When the Lord departed, he left the world open behind him."

Unlike the other plans, Schwarz's discussion of the *open ring* contains one subdivision with a proper heading: "Representing Heaven."[88] This is noteworthy, because it reveals the centrality of eschatology in Schwarz's thought and practice. However, he was not concerned with presumptuously *reproducing* the Heavenly Jerusalem, but rather with "reverent naming" a transcendent realm, albeit "modest, shabby, even executed without skill": "Only that architecture is valid here which takes the eternal rift up into its work and which openly admits that here it is found wanting," which "brings the world to her own most intrinsic form and then translates her into prayer."[89] Schwarz's first proposal, which he never implemented, is to open the rear wall into a

86 CI 77. My emphasis. Schwarz relates this wounded form with the theological reality of the saints, who keep their wounds. CI 93.

87 CI 87. This brings to mind the term in Tillich's theology. Although I could retrace only one (late) mention of Schwarz in Tillich's oeuvre, I do not know if Schwarz was influenced by Tillich. See OAA 192.

88 CI 81–94.

89 CI 84.

"tremendous window" as eschatological "vista, not gateway."[90] Schwarz's practical solution in his *Fronleichnamskirche* (Fig. 2.1) is to paint the sanctuary wall behind the altar-table utterly white as expression of the Mystery, as a Trinitarian reaction against a merely "Christocentric church."[91]

Dixon comments: "The numinous has become incarnate in that white wall. It is a metaphor of the opening into eternity and partakes of the holiness it reveals. It is thus iconic, [...] *theotokos*, God-bearer, the revealer of the sacred way, incarnating sacred meaning in the immediate life of the observer."[92] This "representation of Heaven" is intended as an "eternal movement" (*ewige Bewegung*).[93] The imageless wall is intended to be image as *bildloses Schweigen* and *geheimnisvolle Anwesenheit*:

> This Church is the home of the Holy Presence. To people who see only an empty interior, I reply that they should examine their feelings more deeply. Actually we frequently fail to recognize the serene calm of large uninterrupted planes, the clear expanse of an uncluttered chamber, the pure essential being of simple forms. We tend to call this: 'emptiness'. We prefer to be surrounded by various forms, objects, pictures – just as we prefer sound to silence. Have we forgotten that silence and words go together, just as inhaling and exhaling? That reverent silence is the deepest prayer before God, and that voiced prayer is impossible without silence? The same is true of a great plane that is neither articulated nor filled with pictures and ornaments. This is not emptiness, this is silence – and in the silence is God; and from the stillness of these walls an inkling of God's presence may flower. [...] Essentially, the building is a reminder of God's all-dominating presence.[94]

Because of the radiating Christocentric presence of the contrasting black marble altar-table with tiny cross, Schwarz intended this sacred emptiness to contrast with "another emptiness which is negation, and which is nothing but evil": "So receptive, and at the same time filled with an almost tangible

90 This expression has eschatological repercussions, for a window that gives visual, but no physical access is indeed an adequate architectural expression for the eschatological "already, but not yet." He suggests other solutions with archways or a domed space that mirrors the church.

91 KB 29.

92 Dixon, *Iconic*, 284.

93 KB 29.

94 Guardini, quoted in EB 21.

presence was that space that it *became a throne for the Eternal One*."[95] "It *developed into an Eucharistic chamber* filled with divine being and expressing one thing: that God became man and that it was his way of living in a house."[96] This means that the building *only comes alive* when used as *Eucharistic space*.

Somehow, architectural modernism explored the *limits* of minimalism, which is highly demanding for the (common parish) congregation. Schwarz believed that this wall actually had the power to "unite" the congregation into one body *around* the altar-table. This is his conception of the *open ring*, which comes marvelously to the fore in the circular lighting of *Christus König* in Fulda (1939). In the *Fronleichnamskirche* (Fig. 2.1), we can recognize references to all his seven plans, but perhaps most explicitly the *open ring*, the *way*, and the *dome of light* (*infra*). Schwarz wanted the altar-table to be a threshold and the church "first and foremost [a place] of prayer," as an "intermediate space" "included in the great stream of Eternity," between "two heavenly deeps" facing each other. In order to "represent heaven," due to the rear wall and high windows, Schwarz's buildings are often hermetically closed off from the world. Still today, in an age of heightened ecological and cosmological awareness, some churches close themselves off from the world, as if to preserve some Christian identity.[97] If we today, in faithfulness to Schwarz's vision and spirit, want to explore the limits and "represent heaven," we must somehow bring the world in, and give it the brightness of a new creation.

Although his architectural expression may be dated, I claim that Schwarz's vision is still valid. The world was of deep concern for Schwarz. He believed that building a church is transforming the whole universe, providing it with some sacred center of meaning. Designing the *Fronleichnamskirche* as sacred emptiness, he reasons: "The world was to be a void, completely transformed into pure expectation. […] Our earth was to be placed, as it were, in an attitude or state of prayer." For him, building a church is transforming the world; it is an action on the world. In examining the emptiness of an Egyptian pyramid, a Greek village, a Babylonian ziggurat, and the Jewish Tabernacle, as "humble shapes of earth, transformed into simple readiness to serve," he contends that "since the beginning of time, Earth had been able to offer to the Divine – often only vaguely recognized – only one thing, emptiness, as its ultimate present."

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95 KB 43–45.

96 EB 21. Italics added. The next references are all taken from EB 21–23.

97 We might think here at the hermetic *Notre-Dame de l'Arche de l'Alliance* (1998) in Paris, but also at the *Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels* in Los Angeles (2002), which opens only laterally onto a closed city garden.

Schwarz's preference for the open ring highlights that his main concern was to create a contemplative space. Indeed, Kieckhefer goes as far as to say:

> If Schwarz had been asked whether his goal was to create space for kinetic or for verbal dynamism, he would presumably have replied that neither of these concepts was what he had in mind: contemplative rest, conceived as the terminus of process rather than in itself a process, was the main purpose of the spaces he designed.[98]

This may be effectively true for his practical realizations, but his theory – at least in *Vom Bau der Kirche* – witnesses nevertheless to the importance of a dynamic and vibrant liturgy:

> Thus the simple standing of the people in the open ring is itself the intimation, for it was the Lord himself who, at the very beginning, taught them to stand in this way. When the people follow him they sit with him at table. This form is not the final one but it precedes the final form as question precedes answer. If this form of the world is still empty, then its emptiness says that God is rich abundance, when it is dark, it makes manifest his sacred light, when it is open, it awaits him as its consummation and completion.
>
> Is not the church, when she so stands, like one of the early sculptured figures who stand in prayer with upraised arms, embracing a space – the space of their heads and hearts – and at the same time uttering the heartfelt plea that God may come? And is not the whole of mankind standing like this before the Lord in the earthly interim?[99]

This reminds us how church building is a dynamic art, meant to become alive in the liturgical life of a congregation. Their standing together in an oriented communion of the Lord embodies Schwarz's eschatological vision. The building does not impose on them an observers' role, but puts them into eschatological movement, which cosmographically writes meaning into the universe.

Both case studies of this chapter embody this vision of the *open ring*. In *St François de Molitor*, it is most evident due to the ambo, the cross of glory, and the luminous garden, which break open the ellipse formed by the pews and the sandstone walls (Fig. 5.11). In *St Gregory of Nyssa*, this is less evident as a

98 Kieckhefer, 238.

99 CI 90.

momentary form, but it is included in the multiple transitions between the rotunda around the Table and the oblong space for the Word (Figs. 5.2–5.5).

The chalice of light. Vertically, the *ring*-form can also open up as *axis mundi*:

> From the dome a ray of light falls into the darkness illumining within it the altar. The altar passes on the light like the things onto which a ray of sunlight falls. The altar itself is not sun but illumined earth, neither star nor seed, but 'eye', which is to say: world which sees the sun.[100]

This third plan, the *chalice of light*, is the architectural expression of the Ascension, "the form in which the church still gazes after the departing Lord."[101] But Schwarz does not stop with an uprising movement: this *ascending* movement *returns to the earth*, which "too, is God's holy dwelling – holy the dark, heavy readiness of the soil, holy the abyss of her womb in which God rules." The *chalice* is an "innermost church," the "prototype of the *people* surrounding the table and of the *walls* surrounding the people," related to the *world*, for it awaits matter to be filled; to *human beings*, for it is made for drinking; and to *God*, for it receives the holy blood.[102] Schwarz describes the "inner space" of this plan as an archetypal "sacred tree" planted in the midst of a fertile garden.[103] Unlike the *open ring*, which could be oriented to a garden, the

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100 CI 98. All the references in this section are taken from "The Third Plan. Sacred Parting: The Chalice of Light," CI 95–113, unless stated otherwise. Considering the "blackness implicit in the darkness, the hell implicit in the cave," Schwarz makes a parallel between the earth's temptation of self-sufficient self-enclosedness with Christ's own "temptation of beginning the movement autonomously instead of sacredly." CI 108.

101 Strangely enough, Schloeder reproaches him "similarities with early heterodox Christologies," although Schwarz's ingenious parallel of church architecture with the life of Christ is not meant to shed light on Christological statements about the historical Jesus but rather on *our relationship with him*. Schwarz is concerned with the world: "The world lies open under heaven." CI 95. Unlike him, Schloeder unconvincingly interprets the *chalice of light* as Christ's Baptism where he realizes his divinity! Schloeder seems to forget an *ascending* direction, and thus misses the link with the Ascension. From the opening lines we read that it is not the Spirit who descends, but the eternal Word, whereas the prayers of the faithful rise "like incense." Baptism in this section is never referred to the Lord, but to the centric baptisteries, which are related to mausoleums, because "burial and baptism are movements into the depths." CI 111. Kieckhefer already pointed out how Schloeder misread Schwarz. See Steven Joseph Schloeder, *Architecture in Communion: Implementing the Second Vatican Council through Liturgy and Architecture* (San Francisco, CA: Ignatius Press, 1998), 234–237 and Kieckhefer, 344 n15.

102 CI 35, 200. My emphasis.

103 CI 105.

inner space of the *chalice of light* is itself a garden already open to the heavens.[104]

Surprisingly, in this section of the *chalice of light*, Schwarz discusses also the longitudinal Roman basilica of San Clemente as "an obstructed centric structure." The "life of the building" – always Schwarz's point of gravity – did not merge with its longitudinal structure, because the *circumstantes* formed a wide arc about choir and altar-table, just like an *open ring*. Although Schwarz had admitted to eschew "architectural happenings" that prevent the people from carrying out the movement themselves, architecture must somehow underline or mirror the people's liturgy, so as to put them into movement. This example again provides proof of Schwarz's ability to read an apparently static building as a dynamic, kinetic, and vibrant "event" and "living form."[105] At the end of this section, Schwarz is still searching for the right unity between central and longitudinal dynamics of sheltering and displacement. Speaking of the basilica-form, he states:

> In its rectangular structure, just as in the circular structure, an unresolved remnant was left over – some part of the whole was prevented from being fully carried out. Deep within these forms – which were so often simply taken over – the secret form of the Christian church lies hidden. This form is contained neither in the closed comprehensiveness of the dome nor in the long ranging of the nave. Bursting the one and closing the other, she stands between them in a state of inwardness and yet of displacedness, of having and of not having, of sheltering and of summoning.[106]

Some churches are built explicitly as *chalice of light*: *San Paolo* in Foligno (Fig. 5.12) and the *Cathedral of the Resurrection* in Évry (Fig. 1.6). Other churches

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104 As a *variation* on this plan, the altar is often placed in an apse attached to the ring. For Schwarz, this is an "obstructed rectangular" plan, in which "the life and the form of the structure do not coincide." The tension of the simultaneous *forward and upward* movements is dissonance rather than enrichment. He interprets this theologically as assuming "two dwelling places of heaven," which, in his view, is impossible. He adds that "the technical means of the time were still too limited to bring the two to unity," which would suggest the possibility of such a unity at some stage. I believe this can be done when inviting *time* as a dialogue partner in liturgical architecture, as Schwarz himself later intuits. The liturgical rhythm can thus orient itself at appropriate times towards different "dwelling places of heaven." I believe this balance is found in *St François de Molitor*. In my view, an "obstructed rectangular building" that expresses an unhealthy tension between a centric architecture and a longitudinal liturgy is *St Mary's Cathedral* in San Francisco. CI 111–113.

105 CI 141 and 149.

106 CI 113.

FIGURE 5.12 Chalice of light. San Paolo*, Foligno, Italy* (*Massimiliano and Doriana Fuksas, 2009*)*. Interior*

include a skylight that functions as an *axis mundi*: timid above the tabernacle in *St Canisius* in Berlin, above the baptistery in *Christ the Light Cathedral* in Oakland (Fig. 4.9), and above the altar-table in *Notre-Dame de l'Arche d'Alliance* and *St François de Molitor* in Paris (Fig. 5.6), connecting heaven (circular opening) and earth (square altar-table) in faithfulness to most ancient symbolism.[107] This is done more explicitly in the *Lumen church* (Figs. 1.10, 4.5) and in the *Bruder Klaus Kapelle* (Fig. 1.9), as well as in *St Gregory of Nyssa*, where the *Dancing Saints* fresco in the cupola invites such a transcendent vision, connecting the local Church with the heavenly Church in one *perichoretic* dance of communion (Figs. 5.2, 5.5). The skylight in the *Chapel of Reconciliation* in Berlin (Fig. 3.4), the *Pilgrim Chapel* in Westvleteren (Fig. 3.1), *St Paulus* in Brussels (Fig. 5.10), *St Nikolaus* in Munich (Fig. 4.14) and *Notre-Dame d'Espérance* (Fig. 5.9), *Notre-Dame de la Sagesse* (Fig. 2.6), and *Notre-Dame du Rosaire* in Paris (Fig. 2.4) have obviously a similar uplifting function. Fascinating are the curved skylight in *St Peter Canisius* in Berlin and the shape of a wound in *Christus Hoffnung der Welt* in Wien. They might also be a reference to the suffering Christ of the *dark chalice* (*infra*).

107 See Mircea Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion* (New York: Harper & Row, 1961). Perhaps the circular opening is too subtle to provoke an uplifting awareness:

The way. Schwarz's fourth plan, the *way*, receives the longest treatment.[108] His own realizations show a certain preference for the longitudinal expression of a *direction towards a common destiny* in "imitation of the Lord in time and history." In this context, Schwarz dismisses Desiderius Lenz's spatial sequence of mural narratives for not following a liturgical procession, in which worship and building parallel each other.[109]

Contrary to "documents of despair" in which the *way* is endless, the *Christian* way-form provides hope *when the end becomes center*. Such a recurrent interpretation of the *way* through elements of the *ring* demonstrates Schwarz's ongoing struggle to unite both extreme forms in a harmonious tension. Drawing on medieval and Eastern customs, Schwarz suggests, therefore, a *differentiated use* of the space over time, in which the altar-table is remote at the beginning of service, and only gradually becomes accessible. Time and movement are important elements to understand the dynamics of the *way*-form, which Schwarz, as always, constructs out of the assembly's configuration. The building must be a "living form," "something that happens." People are to be put in movement, as a "marching army" after a leader, and "even if we are loath to admit it, this is one of the great fundamental forms of our being together. [...] Those who are settled down in the closed forms will never understand this pilgrimage." There is no center, no home, no altar-table, and no heart anymore; the Lord is not in our midst, but ever remote, and there is no hope. In this restless but "sacred uniformity," "each human being stands alone within the network of the whole," linked to one another only by a "cool and precisely measured [...] bond of the pattern and not a bond of the heart."

To be in such disillusionment is the decisive moment for theological meaning to emerge. In taking the 'sacred chance' of surrendering themselves without reserve to the direction set out by God, the people's journey comes to an end, and God is at hand: "Here is altar." The sacred way from doorway to altar-table is an "immeasurable" movement pervaded by an eternal God-given measure. Then it becomes clear that the *way* is but a segment of a *ring* with the center in the infinite, and thus another form of communion.

Current seated worship in the bus-like arrangement of pews in a longitudinal church can be experienced anew as communion when people *experience themselves "on the way."* Schwarz emphasizes this kinetic ecclesiology so much,

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we can only hope that a sustained visit to this church may awaken in the visitor such a symbolic resonance.

108 All references, unless stated otherwise, are taken from "The Fourth Plan. Sacred Journey: The Way," CI 114–153.

109 CI 145–151.

FIGURE 5.13 The way. St Luc*, Paris XIXe, France* (*Montel, 1998*)

that at one point he proposes a *mirror* behind the altar-table as the representation of heaven, throwing back at the people an eschatological *vision* of their being part of the mystical body of *communio sanctorum*, making visible their eschatological *lived space* in this foucaldian *utopia* and *heterotopia*. This practical realization might be doubtful, but the idea is sublime, demonstrating the importance of liturgical movement in bringing to light the ecclesiological dimension of the building.

This vision comes to the fore in *St François de Molitor* during the penitential rites, when the entire assembly orients itself towards the cross of glory (Fig. 5.11). The one improvement to Schwarz's plan is the presider's position *in the midst* of a gathered assembly before one God, rather than in front of a marching army. In *St Gregory of Nyssa*, it is essentially during the processions, led by the presider and the lay deacon, that this vision of the pilgrim Church is manifest. *Herz Jesu* in München-Neuhausen is made explicitly in a *way*-form at request of the parishioners (Fig. 1.3). The *Jubilee church* reproduces this liturgical configuration (Fig. 2.8), as well as *St Luc* in Paris (Fig. 5.13) and the Protestant *Chapel of the Brethren* in Cernosice (Fig. 2.11). People still configure easily to this basilical plan as the archetypal shape of a church.

The dark chalice. Schwarz's fifth plan, the *dark chalice*, represents the end of the journey, where Christ, sitting at the altar-table, welcomes his people in the

ultimate, "simple presence of joy, the awaiting light." In connection to the other plans, it is the bright answer to the *open ring*, after having walked the *way*. This whole plan is an attempt to represent the embrace and homecoming of heaven, but also Christ's outstretched arms to the Father in supplication, and the agony of the Pieta:

> Ever higher and ever steeper grow the walls, ever broader grows the empty space. Lost far below in the deep canyon, the little congregation surrounds the altar while round about them and high above them the great happening is accomplished. The flickering light is like the consecrated candle lit beside the dying. It proclaims that the Lord is still with us and that he still suffers his agony.[110]

This is the church of darkness, where only congregation and altar-table are "a last bright speck." Such an inward building merely invites to wake and be quiet (Mk 14:32). Darkness and closed walls are but another attempt to 'represent heaven'.

In *St François de Molitor*, the *dark chalice* can be appreciated especially during evening celebrations, when the garden is cast in darkness, revealing its character as a garden of Agony, a garden of Passion at the foot of the naked Cross. In this church, the night seems particularly appropriate for Good Friday celebrations. Again, the cosmological dimension of this church reveals itself due to its dependence on the changing seasons. In *St Gregory of Nyssa*, there might not be an equivalent for this vision, if not the oblong space for the Liturgy of the Word that ends in a colorful fresco of Saint Gregory of Nyssa (Fig. 5.4). A recent prototype of the *dark chalice* is *St Franziskus* in Regensburg-Burgweinting (Fig. 5.14). We could perceive the *dark chalice* also in the exquisite *St Peter* in Wenzenbach, where the blue color lends itself perfectly for creating an otherworldly atmosphere, a *heterotopia* (Fig. 3.9). Indeed, the *dark chalice* corresponds to the *open ring*, as Schwarz says, but it opens towards darkness, Mystery, a different Kingdom. In *St Theodor* in Köln-Vingst, the stairway to heaven ends in light (Fig. 1.7). In *Herz Jesu* in Völklingen, interiority and darkness are evoked by wrapping a massive steel wall around the church, as such abruptly closing the view behind the glass wall (Fig. 4.6).

The dome of light. The sixth plan, the *dome of light*, is the "joyous vision" of the Apocalypse, the new Jerusalem, the wedding banquet of the Lamb. The whole

110 All references, unless stated otherwise, are taken from "The Fifth Plan: Sacred Cast: The Dark Chalice," CI 154–179. The prototype of this parabolic plan is Schwarz's *Heilig Kreuz* in Bottrop (1953–1957). See KB 235–246.

FIGURE 5.14 The dark chalice. St Franziskus*, Regensburg-Burgweinting, Germany* (*Königs Architekten, 2004*)

universe becomes sacred when cast in divine light.[111] Although Schwarz claims that this vision is impossible to build, it could somehow be intuited in the extraordinarily cosmic *Christ the Light Cathedral* in Oakland (Fig. 5.15) and in the small but wondrous *Dominican chapel* in Louvain-la-Neuve (Fig. 1.1). The *dome of light* is not even Schwarz's last vision, but only part of the eschatological "Cathedral of all times," which is delightfully much more than a pure sphere of light.

In *St François de Molitor*, after passing through the dark narthex, one is taken in and embraced by light (Fig. 5.6). This luminous experience corresponds in my view to Schwarz's *dome of light*. The linear process from city to church, from stress to rest, ends here, where this visitor finds a place for a time to be. In *St Gregory of Nyssa*, the swirling Eucharistic dance around the altar-table, where heavenly and earthly Church are united, might also correspond to this vision, which Schwarz imagined difficult to build. Indeed, perhaps it is only in the dialogue between building and community – that is, *Eucharistic space* – that such a vision can come to light.

111 All references, unless stated otherwise, are taken from "The Sixth Plan. Sacred Universe: The Dome of Light," CI 180–188.

FIGURE 5.15 The dome of light. Christ the Light Cathedral, *Oakland, CA* (*Craig Hartman, 2008*). Priestly ordination on Saturday October 29, 2011

The Cathedral of all times. More important than the six plans that have grown up one out of the other, is Schwarz's conclusion that a "single movement flows uninterruptedly through all the 'plans' and one of its phases is set down in each of them."[112] They are not only plans for churches, but also six 'natural' images of the world in its "solar history" as answer to the eternal sun. Hence, the seventh plan, the *Cathedral of all times*, stands "above all plans," recapitulating and bringing them to completion in the act of divine service.[113] The 'whole' is built up during the changing flow of the liturgical year. Interestingly, one could perceive all of Schwarz's plans represented in his *Fronleichnamskirche* in

112 CI 191. It should be remarked that Schwarz neither discussed the *cruciform* plan – present in his own buildings and in his awe for Gothic architecture – nor an *antiphonal* setting – which is more explored today. The antiphonal setting finds its origin in a monastic setting, and can be found nowadays also in the *Ruusbroec chapel* of the center for Ignatian spirituality Oude Abdij Drongen, Belgium; in *St Gregory of Nyssa Episcopal Church* at San Francisco; and somehow in ellipse-form in *St François de Molitor* in Paris.

113 CI 189. All references in this section are taken from Chapter 3, "The Seventh Plan. The Cathedral of All Times: The Whole," CI 189–210, unless stated otherwise.

Aachen, even though at first sight it is an obvious *way*-form (Fig. 2.1). Sometimes it depends on how a worshiping community appropriates the place.

The aim of church building should be to "render this whole and not [only] the epoch," to make "the *inner* spatiality of a process visible," and to make "the building run parallel to the action." Hence, Schwarz dreams of an "ever-changing space."[114] Schwarz's initial reflection of the body, assuming different forms and yet remaining the same, comes to mind. In Schwarz's prophetic and utopic vision, churches "come into being solely out of the act of worship itself." Instead of a transition from one space to another, the space would be "welling forth from within." The two 'spaces', architectural and liturgical, are put in interplay: "Each of the great basic forms could be represented through the articulation of the people. The building would take some part, as it were, in the transformation of time's forms. This could be emphasized still further by the changing lighting and by the changing decoration of the space."[115] Architecture is an event: "Architecture is lasting but it owes this lastingness to a favorable moment which deposited itself – and architecture lasts only in order to be let back into happening," into "the living interpenetration of process and lastingness." A surprising example is perhaps the Way of the Cross, where "history was transcribed into architecture."

Hence, Schwarz critiques the Protestant idea of the church as an empty vessel, being nothing more than a noble instrument for worship, which is born and dies away as food for the journey. Even an empty vessel, he argues, "would have a form and this form would have a meaning." Similar to what Tillich would later say, churches should combine the *emptiness* of many western churches with the *sacred presence* of many eastern churches. The "Cathedral of all times" is Schwarz's ultimate eschatological vision of church building:

> Only the cathedral is true body. The plans were like limbs of the hidden body of history; they contained the whole by implication but they themselves remained its phase. [...] A higher life is at hand and it speaks from time to time in changing forms. But that which speaks is ever present. It could be called "the church."[116]

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114 CI 198. His vision of medieval cathedrals is also dynamic, which again gives proof of his interpretation of architecture as liturgical event: "Fixed seats were unknown, the position of the people was not predetermined and they were able to mark off their temporary space from the whole." CI 207. Interestingly, Schwarz notes that this has been done in opera, "where the action spreads about it a powerful area of sound and where the scenery, too, changes frequently."

115 "[T]he building can live in the single day and in its swift transformation." CI 208.

116 CI 195.

A last word on Schwarz's eschatological vision of 'representing heaven' is given in the following passage, which describes magisterially the 'already but not yet', albeit without using these exact terms:

> "Heaven" was an element of the plans, or more correctly we would have to say the "place of heaven," for heaven itself remained "beyond" them and had ever to be sought at the place where they themselves remained unfinished and "open."
>
> And at the side of each design stood its temptation, a form of despair: the round form hardened in itself, the cave, the empty journey – the forms of dumb fear into which the world degenerates when it attempts to establish itself in its own meaning and to carry out autonomously the movement of history. And so these worlds perpetually faced decline or ruin and had ever to be renewed in constant sacrifice.[117]

This kinetic vision finds a workable embodiment in the liturgy of *St Gregory of Nyssa*. Schwarz did not examine a monastic, antiphonal setting, such as has been opted for in many current adaptations of churches, and in the oblong space for the Liturgy of the Word of *St Gregory of Nyssa*. However, the dynamism that he pointed out is present in the liturgy, and the assembly is shaped in different configurations, which all translate a different relationship to the Mystery.

Schwarz's seventh plan comes alive in *St François de Molitor* each seventh day of the week in the embodied Trinitarian eschatology of the community, which orients itself in eschatological hope as one journeying *People of God* during the penitential rite, gathers in proleptic anamnesis around the altar-table to be graciously nourished as *Body of Christ* during the sacrificial banquet, and unites the differences of all in one communion as *Temple of the Spirit*. From there, time and time again the assembly is sent back into the world. Hence, all Schwarz's seven plans are thus present in *St François de Molitor* at some point or another during the liturgical year, faithful to Schwarz's own vision. If one particular plan best gives form to the 'everyday' theological essence of this parish church, it is the 'open ring', which combines communion and orientation – just as Schwarz had intuited. Let us know develop this combination between communion and orientation a little bit further.

117 CI 190.

Garden. Oriented Communion

> To be able to fix our gaze, all of us together, on him who is the Creator, the one who receives us into the cosmic liturgy, and who shows us also the path of history – this is what would enable us to recover the dimension of deep unity that exists between the priest and the faithful within their common priesthood.
>
> JOSEPH RATZINGER[118]

In *St François de Molitor*, the entire assembly orients itself to the cross of glory during the penitential rites (Fig. 5.11). By directing ourselves in prayer, we *express* bodily and bring to light spatially an otherwise invisible meaning in this world. As such, this bodily action *is* embodied theology. It is saying with our body that we want to face the God we call our own. In being *oriented*, that is to say, directed towards the place of sunrise at the *oriens* (east), Christians are at one with every religious sun-worshiper and irreligious earthling.[119] They differ from them in interpreting the sun as a symbol for Christ. More than a daily cosmological phenomenon, the sunrise is the symbol of the two comings of Christ: Nativity-Epiphany and the Parousia. As such, the sunrise orients us spatially (cosmically) and temporally (eschatologically): it sheds light on our being and belonging to earth and the cosmic liturgy, at the same time as uniting our salutary past with our liturgical present and eschatological future. A *common direction*, as Joseph Ratzinger has pointed out in the above quotation, can indeed make us aware of our common priesthood. In other words, topography is theotopy.

Hence, eschatology has everything to do with the (spatial) imagination. Eschatology is not imaginary, but utterly imaginative.[120] In this sense, the

118 Joseph Ratzinger, "The Spirit of the Liturgy or Fidelity to the Council: A Reply to Pierre-Marie Gy, O.P." *Doctrine and Life* 52 (2002): 494–500, at 498.

119 Jews, whose direction is also an expression of messianic hope, direct themselves in prayer to the *shekinah* in Jerusalem; and Muslims to the Kaaba in Mecca. In Babylon, Daniel prayed in an upper chamber with windows open to Jerusalem (Dan 6:10). Major studies in Christian orientation and sun-worship are: Franz Joseph Dölger, *Sol salutis: Gebet und Gesang im christlichen Altertum mit besonderer Rücksicht auf die Ostung in Gebet und Liturgie,* Liturgiegeschichtliche Forschungen, 4/5 (Münster: Aschendorff, 2nd rev. ed., 1925 [1920]) and Martin Wallraff, *Christus verus sol: Sonnenverehrung und Christentum in der Spätantike*, JAC.E 32 (Münster: Aschendorff, 2001). See also Bouyer, 17–20.

120 "Christian hope is not imaginary, but it is irreducibly imaginative." The authors explore eschatological images from Scripture and Tradition, which "draw people imaginatively into the elusive reality of the kingdom as it impinges in the present but can never be

German Protestant theologians Andrea Bieler and Luise Schottroff consider "Eucharistic life," a way of living nourished by the Eucharistic liturgy, through two hermeneutical lenses: "sacramental permeability," that is, the capacity to reveal the sacramentality of life in general, such as the Eucharist is related to food in general; and "eschatological imagination," which is a relational and embodied practice of hope in the midst of a reality of brokenness:

> Eschatology is for people who dare to hope that resurrection happens and will happen in a world that is driven by adoration of the forces of death. A celebration of the holy meal that plumbs its eschatological depth will be an initiation into the Eucharistic life as a protest against the powers of death.[121]

In their view, eschatology and corporality belong together. The eschatological perspective opens space for the imagination. More than a system, the eschatological imagination occurs rather in flashes, as a *fabric* of basically four interwoven characteristics. First, it opens *windows* that "show potential for life flourishing." Second, it reveals the Eucharistic life as a place of conflict and *disruption*, because it makes explicit the eschatological tension between the already and the not yet, between absence and presence, between hunger and abundance. Third, its character is *analogous*, based on something familiar, such as the image of the "new creation" is based on this world, and in the Eucharist materiality is cherished and lifted up into God's promise. Fourth, the eschatological imagination creates a "thickening" of experience, such as in the multiplication of the bread (Mt 15:32–39), and a "reversal," such as in the Magnificat (Lk 1:46–55).[122]

We can recognize these four elements in the six case studies of this book. Often, contemporary church architecture opens *windows* by unpredicted shapes and unfamiliar spaces. In this sense, historicist architecture is rather unimaginative. The windows that are opened by the six case studies all "show potential for life flourishing," focusing on the three characteristics retrieved from Rahner: present, Christ, and salvation. Perhaps this is the clearest in *St François de Molitor* with its wall opened onto a garden (Fig. 5.11), but also the iconography of *Our Lady of the Angels* (Fig. 4.12) and *St Gregory of Nyssa*

grasped." Richard Bauckham and Trevor Hart, *Hope against Hope: Christian Eschatology at the Turn of the Millennium* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1999), 153–162.

121 Andrea Bieler and Luise Schottroff, *The Eucharist: Bodies, Bread, and Resurrection* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2007), 7.

122 Bieler and Schottroff, 15–48.

(Fig. 5.5) help in opening imaginative windows onto a heavenly Church. All six case studies show Eucharistic life as *disruption*, but this is perhaps the clearest in the *Chapel of Reconciliation* with its pieces incrusted in the walls and its mutilated retable (Figs. 3.2–3.5). All six case studies create spaces on a human scale, where the *analogous* dimension between now and then (Rahner's emphasis on the present) is essential. Perhaps most striking are the communion of saints tapestries and fresco in *Our Lady of the Angels* and *St Gregory of Nyssa*, because they depict ordinary people with whom it is easy to connect. Finally, the *thickening* and *reversal* of experience comes to the fore especially in the food pantries in *St Gregory of Nyssa* and in *St Theodor* in Köln-Vingst, where an entire 'underground church' is built for distributing goods to less fortunate citizens (Fig. 1.8). This dimension is literally situated underground, and at the same time evokes Lefebvre's concept of *lived space* as clandestine, underground side of society, its foucaldian *heterotopia*, its critically prophetic mirror.[123]

Schwarz made us understand that his plans are sequences rather than blueprints. Hence, we can speak of 'oriented communion' in a dynamic way, in which a worshiping community adopts different spatial configurations during one celebration. Let me now explore how this can be done, and come to a proposal.

Orientation, as we have seen in *St François de Molitor*, can be a spatial expression of the 'already but not yet'. For eschatological reasons, church architecture is also meant to be a sign of genuine novelty in the midst of our world. Does it orient towards a dream, a vision, a kingdom of justice and peace? For the British Methodist theologian Geoffrey Wainwright, "any eschatology which reduces the cosmic reference to anthropology, and the anthropology to 'spiritualism', is guilty simply of ignoring the bread and wine of the Eucharist."[124] This happens in architecture when our churches do not close themselves off from the outer world, but open themselves cosmologically, offering their own interpretative framework. Too many contemporary designs fence themselves off from the world, as if to protect some hidden treasure from all corruption outside. We might think of Évry Cathedral (Fig. 0.1) or *Notre-Dame de l'Arche d'Alliance* in Paris (Fig. 4.16). A total *Crystal Cathedral*-like transparency is another extreme.

123 PE 43 (PS 33).

124 Wainwright, 185. He draws on Ireneaus, *Adversus Haereses*, IV, 18,5: "For as the bread from the earth, receiving the *invocationem Dei*, is no longer common bread but a Eucharist composed of two things, an earthly and a heavenly: so also our bodies, partaking of the Eucharist, are no longer corruptible, having the hope of eternal resurrection."

Eschatology comes also to the fore in the way church architecture gives expression to the heavenly banquet. The church does not need to depict a vision of the heavenly Jerusalem, or mimic the supposed structure of the Temple, but somehow *bring together in a communal banquet* – sharing of divine and earthly gifts – a local, universal, and heavenly community of worshipers. We have seen the prophetic and ethical undertones in the food pantry at *St Gregory of Nyssa*. The Eucharist celebrated in any particular church is already a *communio sanctorum*.

It is deplorable that the recent polemical debate around liturgical orientation narrows its scope drastically and unnecessarily to the position of the presider during the Eucharistic canon, as if one has to choose between two incompatible options: *ad orientem* or *versus populum*.[125] The problem in this unfortunately static opposition arises with the '*or*', which I hope one day will be a creative '*and*', signifying a healthy combination of *ad orientem* and *versus populum*.[126] The word 'healthy' here means at least avoiding uniformity.

There is, of course, the *historical* argument that the *ad orientem* was the liturgical practice until recently, even when its symbolic meaning was gradually lost.[127] Scholars in favor of the *ad orientem* even go back to the hypothesis

125 In his recent response to the critics of the postconciliar liturgical reform, the Jesuit liturgical scholar John F. Baldovin discusses, albeit without exhaustive treatment, two questions of church architecture that are "still hotly contested today": the orientation of the altar, and the position of the tabernacle. John F. Baldovin, *Reforming the Liturgy: A Response to the Critics* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2008), 80–82, 105–113, and 153–154.

126 This expression refers to the topographical situation of the major Roman basilicas, in which *altare sit ad orientem, versus populum*, as reported in the *Ritus servandus in celebratione Missae* of the Roman Missal of Pius V (1570). See *Missale Romanum ex decreto Sacrosancti Concilii Tridentini restitutum Pii V Pont. Max. iussu editum, Ritus servandus in celebratione Missae,* V, 3, in *Missale Romanum: Editio Princeps (1570),* edited by M. Sodi and A.M. Triacca, Monumenta Liturgica Concilii Tridentini 2 (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1998). See Uwe Michael Lang, *Turning Towards the Lord: Orientation in Liturgical Prayer* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2004), 30. In Lang's view, the expression *versus populum* in the *Ritus servandus* is merely "an explanatory appositive," and thus lacks theological weight. I will show further on how such a harsh separation between topography and theology is precarious. Drawing on Nußbaum and Jungmann, Lang points out that the *versus populum* historically did not necessarily imply a visual connection between altar and people. Otto Nußbaum, *Der Standort des Liturgen am christlichen Altar vor dem Jahre 1000: Eine archäologische und liturgiegeschichtliche Untersuchung*, Theophaneia 18, 2 vols. (Bonn: Hanstein, 1965), I, 418–419; Lang, *Turning*, 31.

127 In his historical study of the place of the celebrant in the early church before the year 1000, Otto Nußbaum came to the (wrong) conclusion that the *versus populum* celebration was a common feature. Marcel Metzger has contested this in his 1971 review, demonstrating

that the Last Supper followed the contemporary Mediterranean custom of reclining on the convex side of a small semi-circular (or D-shaped) *stibadium*, whose open side facilitated serving the guests. Christ supposedly occupied the place of honor *in cornu dextro*.[128] We have seen in *St Gregory of Nyssa* an interesting retrieval of this ancient custom.

More important is the main *theological* argument in favor of the *ad orientem* today. This does not imply geographical accurateness to the Orient, but, as expressed with authority by Jungmann, precisely the *common direction* of presider and people, which shows the pilgrim Church on her way to a God she does not possess, in a *doxological* and *sacrificial* movement.[129] Both dimensions are essential, especially in a time when there is an unfortunate tendency to emphasize the *ad orientem* only for its presupposed sacrificial character. For instance, a thorough study of the German liturgical scholar Uwe Michael Lang provides convincing historical, theological, and pastoral arguments for common direction in liturgical prayer, but in my view fails to argue why this should be done particularly during the Eucharistic canon, for which "it is more than fitting that the whole congregation, including the celebrant, be directed towards the Lord, and that is expressed by turning towards the altar – whether it is actually oriented or only indicates the 'liturgical' east. Hence the celebrant should not face the people during this part of the Mass."[130] He argues, not unconvincingly: "When we speak to someone, we obviously face that person. Accordingly, the whole liturgical assembly, priest and people, should face the

that the main concern has always been orientation more than the idea of facing the people. Jaime Lara has confirmed this recently. See Marcel Metzger, "La place des liturges à l'autel," *Revue des Sciences Religieuses* 45 (1971): 113–145; Jaime Lara, "*Versus Populum* Revisited," *Worship* 68 (1994) 210–221; Martin Wallraff, "L'orientamento: linee storiche," *Spazio liturgico e orientamento. Atti del IV Convegno litrugico internazionale, Bose, 1–3 giugno 2006*, ed. Goffredo Boselli (Magnano: Qiqajon, 2007), 153–166; and Robert F. Taft, "Spazio e orientamento nelle liturgie d'Oriente e d'Occidente: convergenze e divergenze," *Spazio liturgico*, 217–240.

128 Nußbaum, I, 444 ff.; Bouyer, 53–54; Lara, 211; Schloeder, 69–74; Lang, *Turning*, 61.

129 Josef Andreas Jungmann, *Missarum Sollemnia: Eine genetische Erklärung der römischen Messe*, vol. I: *Messe im Wandel der Jahrhunderte, Messe und kirchliche Gemeinschaft, Vormesse* (Wien: Herder, 1962 (1948)), 333, n15, quoted in Albert Gerhards, "Versus Orientem – versus populum: Zum gegenwärtigen Diskussionsstand einer alten Streitfrage," *Theologische Revue* 98 (2002): 15–22, at 21. Bouyer would agree, and emphasize the *eschatological* dimension of the common direction.

130 Lang, *Turning*, 122. See also his "Una direzione comune nella preghiera liturgica," in *Spazio liturgico*, 203–216.

same way, turning towards God to whom prayers and offerings are addressed in this common act of Trinitarian worship."[131]

Lang is right in highlighting the Trinitarian dimension of Eucharistic worship. The question remains how this comes to the fore topologically? Let us therefore indeed turn towards the Trinitarian God, but where is the Trinity to be found? In the East? In the presider? In the Eucharistic species? In the proclaimed Word? In the assembly that prays and sings? There is indeed a fourfold sacramental presence of Christ during the Eucharistic celebration, as mentioned in SC 7.[132] The whole celebration is spiritually oriented "to the Father, through the mediation of Christ in the Holy Spirit," and "always facing God and facing the people," as a recent document of the Congregation for Divine Worship stated.[133] For theotopical reasons, I agree with Lang that "the recovery of this practice [of the *ad orientem* understood as common direction] is indispensable for the welfare of the Church today."[134] However, I disagree with his proposal that the Eucharistic canon should be celebrated *ad orientem* in order to preserve its *sacrificial* character and its *distinction* with the Liturgy of the Word.[135] The question, which remains unanswered in his study, is how a Eucharistic canon *ad orientem* is able to maintain the pastoral and theological emphasis on the Eucharist as anamnetic meal and proleptic banquet, which are valuable postconciliar acquisitions of the *versus populum*.

Although it is right to admit, and postconciliar evidence witnesses and warns us against a tendency of the *versus populum* to narrow the view to a merely inward looking celebration, a "self-enclosed circle," in which the

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131 Lang, *Turning*, 32.

132 Christ is present "not only *in the person of His minister*, […] but *especially under the Eucharistic species*. By His power He is present in the sacraments, so that when a [person] baptizes it is really Christ Himself who baptizes. He is present *in His word*, since it is He Himself who speaks when the holy scriptures are read in the Church. He is present, lastly, *when the Church prays and sings*." (SC 7) http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/ documents/vat-ii_const_19631204_sacrosanctum-concilium_en.html#_ftn20 [accessed February, 29, 2012] This fourfold sacramental presence of Christ lies at the basis of the latest book of American liturgical theologian Paul A. Janowiak, *Standing Together in the Community of God: Liturgical Spirituality and the Presence of Christ*, A Pueblo Book (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2011).

133 Congregatio de Cultu Divino et Disciplina Sacramentorum, "Editoriale: Pregare 'ad orientem versus'," *Not* 29 (1993): 249, translated in Lang, *Turning*, 126.

134 Lang, *Turning*, 126.

135 The more *dialogical* parts (the Introductory Rites, the Liturgy of the Word, parts of the Communion Rite, and the Concluding Rite) could in his view be celebrated *versus populum*. His proposal is thus also a combination *ad orientem, versus populum*. Ibid., 19.

presider receives more attention than is due. Actually, this is not so much related to *facing the people* as to an exclusive face-to-face opposition.[136] Can the presider not be a "gatherer of the community into communion," as the American Jesuit theologian Paul A. Janowiak has suggested,[137] *from within*? The spatial solution to both extreme tendencies of the *ad orientem* ánd the *versus populum* thus implies the ecclesiological move to posit the presider *among* the congregation. The American theologian Richard R. Gaillardetz, not directly in favor of the *ad orientem* but willing to examine this position, has expressed this recently, arguing that reorienting the presider's position does not go far enough. He states that the ancient liturgical arrangement was "eschatological in nature" and "ecclesial in form." This implies that recovering the *eschatological* focus should not neglect the *communal* dimension: "Let the people process with [the priest] to the altar!"[138]

A common direction, observes the German liturgist Albert Gerhards (°1951), can make a gathered community aware of being part of the invisible *communio sanctorum*. He brings to light the eschatological symbolism of light and cross, suggestively modifying the term *versus orientem* into *versus lucem* and *versus crucem*.[139] Indeed, from early on, an image of the cross was placed on the East wall of churches and monastic dwellings, symbolizing the eschatological cross, the glorious sign of the *Sol Victor*.[140] The liturgical East became more

136 Ratzinger, *Eastward*, 145; Louis Van Tongeren, "Vers une utilisation dynamique et flexible de l'espace: Une réflection renouvelée sur le réaménagement d'églises," *Questions Liturgiques* 83 (2002): 156–178, at 165. The Dutch liturgist Louis Van Tongeren does not provide eschatological and Trinitarian arguments, but rather sociological and liturgical-pastoral reasons for his position. Already in 1938, Rudolf Schwarz warned against the self-enclosed circle (*supra*).

137 Janowiak, esp. 127–164.

138 Richard R. Gaillardetz, "Re-oriented," *Commonweal* 136/21 (December 2009): 30. The dynamic process of the assembly with the clergy draws on Bouyer's research of early Syrian practices. Moreover, he calls it a fidelity to tradition to remove pews and altar rails.

139 Gerhards, *Versus*, 21. Like Ratzinger and Lang, Gerhards is favorable for retrieving an eschatological dimension in order to open the self-enclosed tension of the *versus populum*, but warns against an unilateral emphasis on the sacrificial dimension of the Eucharist. The German architect Johannes Krämer proposes an "oriented gathering" (*Orientierte Versammlung*) based on Schwarz's *open ring*. Unfortunately, Krämer's proposal does not, in the end, go further than Schwarz's, although he explores the spatial differentiation between the two parts of the liturgy. The question also remains about how his proposal would be practicable for large congregations. See Johannes Krämer, "Offener Raum und orientierte Versammlung," *Gottesdienst* 35 (2001): 81–83.

140 See Cyrille Vogel, "Versus ad Orientem," *La Maison-Dieu* 70 (1962): 67–99; "L'orientation vers l'Est du célébrant et des fidèles pendant la célébration eucharistique," *L'Orient Syrien*

important than the literal, geographical East. In the same sense, the turn towards *natural light* – wherever it is to be found in a particular church – is more important than the literal point of sunrise, because light participates in *perceived space*, which clings closer to the body, in contrast to the mere knowledge of a geographical point on earth that belongs only to *conceived space*. I refer here to the – in reference to the lie of the building – awkward turn of the catechumens in the Cathedral of Oakland during their Baptism (*supra*).

Another question concerning liturgical dynamism is whether it is not a stronger symbol (because it is *embodied*) to *turn physically to* a common direction (as is done in *St François de Molitor* (Fig. 5.11)), than where the prayer direction from the start *coincides* with the lie of the building? Indeed, turning around liturgically is *embodied theotopy*. Though rich and transformative, the Eucharist would be impoverished if one were to maintain the same orientation during the whole celebration. Architecturally, this line of orientation may be laid out clearly, statically, rooted in solid matter, relentlessly pointing beyond the local gathering. On specific moments during the celebration, this line may be emphasized through a *common physical turning* towards the common goal. In these moments, the liturgical action *resonates* with one of the architectural lines, topographically encrusted in the spatial and material surroundings, as if the building begins to *sing* harmonies to the liturgical melody. Therefore, a *dynamic* orienting of the whole congregation is more powerful than a *static* orientation from beginning to end.

My proposal would be Dialogical, Communal, and Oriented: *dialogical* in the Introductory and Concluding Rites and in the Liturgy of the Word, *communal* in the Liturgy of the Eucharist, and *oriented* in the collect prayers and penitential rite. These three dimensions give direction to the fundamental relationship between God and us. There is a dynamic balance between them. In this way, I do want to lose neither the acquisitions of the early Church, nor of the last ecumenical council.

Dialogical. In the Introductory and Concluding Rites, presider and assembly face each other, dialoguing together in God's Name. The assembly receives God's blessing by the intermediary of the presider. It is fitting that in this constellation both face each other. It would be even clearer if the intermediary and kenotic[141] role of the presider could be expressed spatially, as he speaks not in his own

9 (1964): 3–37; "La croix eschatologique," in *Noël, Épiphanie, Retour du Christ*, ed. A.M. Dubarle, B. Botte *et al.* (Paris: Cerf, 1967), 85–108.

141 Janowiak speaks of the "kenotic spirituality of liturgical leadership," which consists in a "self-emptying, servant leadership, radical vulnerability, and a bodiliness that is not afraid to be human." Janowiak, 157. Hence, he is attentive to the "relational, dialogical, and

name, but in the name of Christ who is the one gathering the assembly. He could, for instance, stand at the foot of the cross, or with his back to the light. The Liturgy of the Word is also dialogical, and here it would be fitting if the presider sits among the people, in the spatially *receiving* position. Together all receive God's Word. Here also, it would be fitting to express the divine origin of this word spatially, as is done in *St François de Molitor*, by having light coming from behind; or in the Cathedral of Oakland, at the foot of the cross (Fig. 4.1). That this is not a merely passive reception, but a true *dialogue*, becomes clear with the responsorial psalm and the sung alleluia. This dialogue is the dialogue of the Spirit, which unites without imposing uniformity, brings all together in one temple, and reminds us of our being ourselves temples of the Spirit. In this dialogical encounter, the free in-between space is essential. It is this space of *communio* and *perichoresis* that transfigures the gathered community in communion. It is the communion of the Spirit, by which space is given to one another. This *Eucharistic space*, which encompasses the universe, is an *inner* space, the Trinitarian space of the Spirit. In this phase of the liturgy, the ecclesiological and communal dimensions of the *Temple of the Spirit* are highlighted.

Communal. That the Eucharist is not only a sacrificial meal but also a commemorative and proleptic banquet must never be forgotten. The most appropriate spatial expression is obviously neither the face-to-face celebration, nor the common-direction celebration. Even if the Last Supper was celebrated in semi-circular form, the disciples were facing each other *at the same time as* being oriented. A combination of both positions is possible for small congregations. Steven Schloeder's observation that it would be difficult to arrange a church today in this way has recently been countered in a convincing way in *St Gregory of Nyssa*, where the presider is not situated *in cornu dextro*, but much more appropriately, *in persona Christi-diakonos* at the open servants' side, in remembrance of Jesus' own words (Lk 22:27). The congregation is gathered *around* the central mysteries. There is no danger of a self-enclosed circle here, for the wooden D-shape altar-table in the center of the Eucharistic space is seen in all its depth and height, opening an *axis mundi* towards the cupola; and people change position constantly, following a liturgical flow that unfolds an appropriate multivocality. This moment of the Eucharistic prayer is a moment of communal gathering *around* Christ's sacrifice. Spatially, what is important here

participative" nature of intermediary sacramental presence in the midst of the assembly: "By means of personal presence and human gesture, the presider must always *engage* the assembly as primary celebrants of the mystery." Ibid., 140. The entire liturgical dynamic of each celebration must create an appetite for the "real presence of Christ in the eucharistic bread and wine [that] finds its deepest meaning and reality par excellence when the assembly receives holy communion." Ibid., 201.

is a Eucharistic *center*, a *kernel*, a common *focal point*, which configures the surrounding space into *Eucharistic space*. At this moment of the liturgy, the ecclesiological and sacramental dimensions of the *Body of Christ* are highlighted.

Oriented. When the whole congregation, presider and people together, are oriented to the liturgical east, they stand humbly imploring God's mercy and giving glory, awaiting the *parousia*: "In this liturgical gesture the Church turns to her source of life, the risen and ascended Lord, whose return she desires and expects."[142] Together, they face in a *common direction*, being one people of the same God. The important spatial element here is the *direction*, the movement outwards, which configures the space into *Eucharistic space*. Instead of *ad orientem*, Walter Zahner and Johannes Krämer prefer to speak of *cum populo*, which can in their view only be understood when the altar-table occupies the center of the congregation.[143] During these moments of the liturgy, the ecclesiological and eschatological dimensions of the *People of God* are highlighted and given spatial expression.

Spiritus Loci as Expectation for the Community: Dance and Garden

> Instruments should be formed out of meaning and function at once – then beautiful, clear, basic forms arise which seek to be neither more nor less than chalices, candlesticks, a table, a book, a wall. They need not be utterly without adornment but their ornamentation should serve their meaning. A hanging lamp should above all show the flame which consumes the oil, a candlestick exists for the candle, a lectern for the book, the book for the writing and the writing for the reading.
>
> RUDOLF SCHWARZ[144]

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142 Lang, *Turning*, 126.

143 Johannes Krämer and Walter Zahner, "Realizzazioni di spazi liturgici in Germania: Analisi liturgica e architettonica," in *Spazio liturgico e orientamento. Atti del IV Convegno liturgico internazionale, Bose, 1-3 giugno 2006*, ed. Goffredo Boselli (Magnano: Qiqajon, 2007), 61–84, at 78. In this article, the authors examine recent architectural realizations in Germany, from the point of view of Krämer's tripartite proposal of proclamation, prayer, and Eucharist. Whereas Krämer emphasizes the unidirectional 'proclamation', I highlight the *dialogical* character, in which the assembly not only reacts to the Word of God, adopting it in the responsorial psalm, but also actively listens and receives. Moreover, my proposal deepens its Trinitarian dimension, and explores the *versus hortum*. Johannes Krämer is the diocesan architect of Mainz and member of the scientific committee of the periodical *Das Münster*. See also Johannes Krämer, "Offener Raum und orientierte Versammlung," *Gottesdienst* 35 (2001): 81–83.

144 CI 200.

In this final chapter, I have examined *Eucharistic space* from its liturgical appropriation by worshiping parish communities, in the theory of Schwarz and in the practice of *St Gregory of Nyssa* and *St François de Molitor*. Liturgical architecture, as *lived space*, allows the ecclesial body of a worshiping community to *dance* around an altar-table and to orient itself towards an eschatological *garden* of abundance – in its *ethical* and *cosmological* dimensions. Both *body-building* (immanence) and *orientation* (transcendence) are dimensions of the *Spiritus loci* as expectation. Liturgical architecture transfigures our ordinary being-in-the-world into a being-before-God.[145] Hence, *Eucharistic space* lays bare how contemporary church architecture builds community and orients the world towards the promised Kingdom.

The food pantry at *St Gregory of Nyssa* (Fig. 5.5) and the underground 'church' of *St Theodor* in Köln-Vingst (Fig. 1.8) brought to light the ethical dimension of liturgical architecture. That this dimension is intrinsic to liturgy and eschatology, the French phenomenologist Jean-Yves Lacoste has intuited: "If, in the end, ethical reason also reveals itself to have a liturgical meaning, it is because it can bring about a subversion within the world analogous to what liturgy, in a restricted sense of the term, is capable of in the margins of the world."[146] Hence, "liturgy enables us to dwell in the world and on the earth by superimposing on our facticity the order of an ethical vocation that alone authorizes us to let the Kingdom invest itself in world and earth in advance."[147] In conclusion, "liturgy is the bracketing of being-in-the-world. Ethics is the step back that enables us to take hold once agiain, prior to the violences of history, of a relation to the real in the element of praxis that anticipates the eschatological reign of God."[148]

Both theoretical and practical parts of this chapter pointed to a flexible dynamism of church architecture in following the flow of the liturgical year and adapting itself to a specific local community. The matter is not only how matter is built, but also how matter is used. That is why architecture can be theology, why a church builds an ecclesial body:

> The teachings about church building, or better, leading to church building, are instructions in how the Church comes into being. And she is taken so seriously, so literally and above all so 'visibly', that she can be written down in great 'plans'. […] The architect who builds is the vicar of

145 Lacoste, *Experience*, 39.
146 Ibid., 74.
147 Ibid. 74–75.
148 Ibid., 76.

> all architectural reality. He [she] gives visible form to that which erects itself secretly inside of [human beings]. But all are bound in duty to the building, all are involved in his [her] total work – that the Church come into being ever and again, that the spiritual form be real, for this all are accountable. But one [person] makes manifest the form of the common spiritual structure and in his [her] deed the rules and plans of sacred "edification" can be recognized. Therefore the building is the concern of all for it is an image of that first architecture which God [Godself] works with [God's] people – it is a true 'symbol'.[149]

Schwarz takes church building seriously, because "in the realm of the creative it stands at the place where the question concerning the knowledge of God stands in the realm of scholarship." In a beautiful passage, Schwarz brings theology and architecture into correlation. Architecture is equivalent to theology when it is designed "in such a way that it may succeed as God's work." Church building is a "holy work" that prays, knowing things "in their openness and readiness," naming them "at the heart" with "tenderness" and "serious love for the details" in order to "unlock," "realize," "unfold," and enable them "to find their proper places almost by themselves."[150] Hence, church building is not merely 'applied theology' or 'illustrated liturgy' but "bound strictly to its own meaning and with it exhausted."[151] Knowing this meaning to be the living Church and Christ as the only "sacred measure," it becomes clear that Steven J. Schloeder misread Schwarz.[152]

Let me now return to Maximus's theological insight of *mystagogic space*, and distill two hermeneutic keys for communitarian appropriation avoiding

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149 CI 213.

150 CI 214.

151 CI 212. Schwarz has little patience with the 'sacred measure' of *conceived space*, as if God were occupied with hidden geometry. The "real" everyday world "of the poets and the builders" has little to do with "the feeling of desolation which overcomes us when we go through the streets of a city which is built according to a right-angled plan but which has no center: much room yet no space." CI 124, 130. Human beings are the measure of all things "only because [they have] been measured by the measure of God." CI 228.

152 According to Schloeder, "Schwarz denied that church architecture was about theology or liturgical practice and therefore could not concern himself with the ecclesiological nature of the parish community or with the liturgical ramifications of the Mass." Schloeder, 238. Schloeder also reproduces the wrong image for Schwarz's 'Cathedral of all times', namely St Peter's basilica in Rome, which disparages his discussion. Kieckhefer, who pointed this out, already deplored Schloeder's "inquisitorial" critique of Schwarz's so-called "Christological heresies." See Schloeder, 234–238 and Kieckhefer, 344 n15.

both separation and confusion (see Chapter 1). One hermeneutic key is the question *where to locate the lived space of the church* ('garden'), whether on the 'stage' of a sanctuary or in the nave, which Maximus hoped to be a sanctuary in potency. For instance, a particularly refined example of the appropriation of *Eucharistic space* can be experienced in the monastic church *Onze-Lieve-Vrouw van het Fiat* in Opgrimbie, Belgium (2004). The obvious *domus Dei*-architecture that strictly separates sanctuary and nave emphasizes a *shape* pattern of order and discipline and a *hang* pattern of contemplation towards the elevated altar-table as main centering focus. At certain times, however, icons are revered as secondary devotional centering foci. In a playful moment of *swing* energy, sisters break out of their ordered ranks and move reverently to the icons to bow, to make the sign of the cross, and to kiss them reverently but quickly, so as to permit others to do the same. Hence, the nave becomes the point of gravity or *lived space* as "sanctuary in potency," transfigured into sanctuary through the reverential actions of the sisters.

The other useful question based on Maximus is *how the sanctuary is to be a nave in act* ('dance'), that is, a place where an assembly gathers in celebration. The sacredness does not reside in the clergy alone, but requires the entire community (which naturally does not necessarily imply the physical presence of all of its members). On the one hand, the *division* in *Herz Jesu* in München (Fig. 1.3) and *Notre-Dame de l'Arche d'Alliance* (Fig. 4.16) tends towards *separation*, if the interrelatedness between sanctuary and nave is not given expression. It is my contention that our times are particularly in need of manifesting this *union*. On the other hand, the *union* in *St François de Molitor* and *St Gregory of Nyssa* would tend towards confusion if clear *distinctions* are not made between sanctuary and nave. These distinctions may be spatial or temporal. In *St François*, a masterpiece of spatially expressing the Chalcedonian paradox, this has been done excellently by the *axial* placement and the use of the same *material* for the liturgical furniture (Figs. 5.6 and 5.7). In *St Gregory*, as has been said, the Chalcedonian paradox has been given an interpretation *in time*, transforming nave into sanctuary and back, on the periodical fluctuations of the liturgical gatherings (Fig. 5.2-5.5). Both are good experiments in my view –Tillichian *victories of spirit* – for which Maximus' insight is valid. Both case studies demonstrate how architecture can nourish theological understanding. Hence, the correlation between theology and architecture is in no way a one-way relationship of existential question and theological answer.

In conclusion, church architecture is a victory of spirit when two dimensions, symbolized by dance and garden, relate as distinction-in-union, and the one is defined by the other. Maximus' insight can be expressed architecturally

in diverse ways, each of which implies a different ethos from the community. His vision is a heuristic tool for judging churches that tend towards separation and confusion. In that case, the community must be particularly lucid in its spatial use. Only in apparent contrast with Tillich's aforementioned emphasis on 'victory', Schwarz underlines the need for 'failure': "That which is new in the world comes straight from God at the moment when it is no longer hoped for; this is the mystery of true and sacred failure."[153] Church building is "the great form of surrender," because "by ourselves we can build no churches: that, God must do." This emphasis on failure corresponds with an essential dimension of eschatology:

> The ultimate orientation for human action, the highest good, is therefore not a human project, but, if the expression is allowed, God's project with his world. This provides the ultimate horizon for human action but also liberates it from having to bring it about by its own means.[154]

153 CI 231.

154 Schwöbel, 217–241.

FIGURE 6.1 Abbey Church of Our Lady, *Novy Dvur, Czech Republic* (*John Pawson, 2004*). Interior view on April 4, 2013, 7 pm

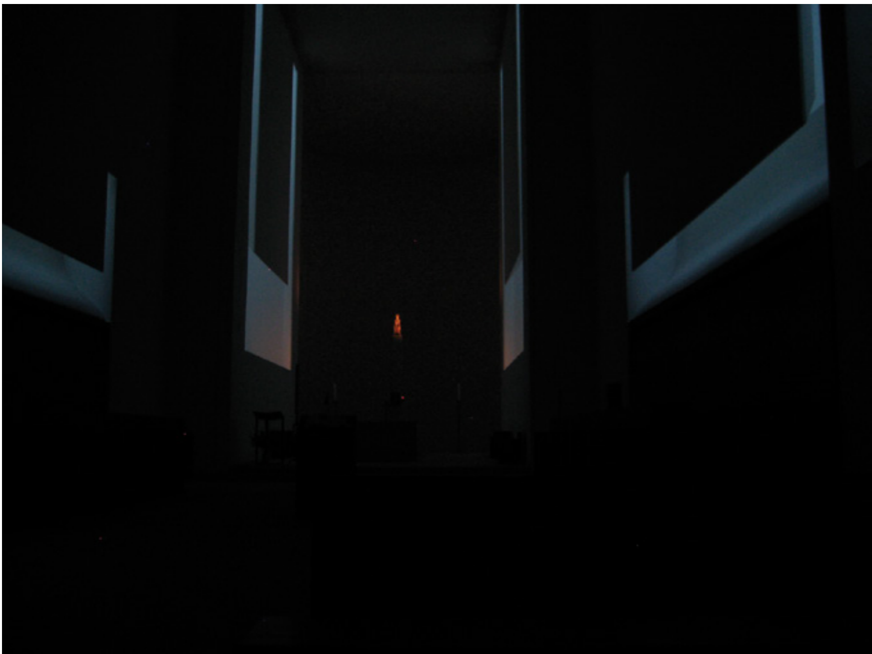

FIGURE 6.2 Abbey Church of Our Lady, *Novy Dvur, Czech Republic* (*John Pawson, 2004*). Interior view on April 4, 2013, 7.50 pm

The Place of the Spirit

> The Name – it has to be dwelt in without saying it;
> but by letting it say, name, and call us.
>
> JEAN-LUC MARION[1]

> Church architecture is not Christ-centered but Trinitarian: *here* is the dwelling place of the Spirit, who animates everything and lets the world blossom to the fullness of its beauty; *there* is the threshold, the place of the Lord, who is with his people and yet gone to the Father; and *beyond* are the spaces of eternity.
>
> RUDOLF SCHWARZ[2]

The Spirit reveals Christ, who reveals the Father. This statement is a short Trinitarian theology of revelation, on which I have built my theological method for contemporary church architecture. In its three dimensions, I have explored three spatial metaphors for the Spirit, as *expansion* of Christ the Light for a human body, as *expression* of Christ the Logos for a human understanding, and as *expectation* of Christ the Savior for a human community. This itinerary started as an apology for contemporary church architecture. I have called this endeavor *Spiritus loci*, because theologically there is often more at stake than a worldly *genius loci*. Instead of mere shades of gray, contemporary church architecture can be a *templum Spiritus*, or "dwelling place of the holy Spirit," as Rudolf Schwarz stated. This anonymous and faceless Spirit[3] introduces mystagogically into a Name "to be dwelt in," as Jean-Luc Marion intuited. This Name, the threshold of Christ, opens up the eternal space of the Father. Theologically, contemporary church architecture is meant to open up such a 'Godspace' of divine encounter. This does not happen automatically, and therefore, my threefold method is also valid as a practical checklist for future constructions.

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1 Jean-Luc Marion, *In Excess: Studies of Saturated Phenomena*, trans. Robyn Horner and Vincent Berraud, Perspectives in Continental Philosophy 27 (New York: Fordham University Press, 2002), 162.

2 "Der Kirchenbau ist nicht christozentrisch, sondern trinitarisch, hier der Wohnort des Geistes, der alles belebt und die Welt zu ihrer Schönheit erblühen läßt, dahinter die Schwelle, der Ort des Herrn, der bei den Seinen ist und doch fortging zum Vater, und dahinter die Räume der Ewigkeit." Rudolf Schwarz, *Kirchenbau: Welt vor der Schwelle* (Heidelberg: F.H. Kerle Verlag, 1960), 29.

3 Bernard Sesboüé, *L'Esprit sans visage et sans voix: Brève histoire de la théologie du Saint-Esprit* (Paris: DDB, 2009).

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The three dimensions together make it possible for architecture to be *mystagogic space*, to introduce in the Mystery. My term *mystagogic space* translates the more commonly used *sacred space*, which is unfortunately less defined. *Mystagogic space* is oriented towards the Mystery, and unfolds in three dimensions.

What is the place of the Spirit in architecture? I have explored her spatial metaphors, based upon the Biblical expression "in the Spirit." This Spirit makes herself known as *synaesthetic space* to our individual body, as *kerygmatic space* to our understanding mind, and as *Eucharistic space* to our communal body. Hence, a theological reading of architecture goes beyond the decodification of clichés of churchliness, such as steeples and Gothic windows. That was the whole point of this book to demonstrate that architecture is *theotopy* by being more than a visual art alone. With this book, I have intended to broaden the – in the literature and the common opinion – dominant *conceived space* (Lefebvre) by including the body in its individual and communal sense. Theology should not be reduced to words and concepts alone, but can learn from non-verbal expressions such as architecture.

By choosing concrete buildings as main theological sources of this interdisciplinary endeavor, I have embedded these reflections within architecture. Contemporary architecture is particularly apt for revealing transcendence in our world. Its unpredictable playfulness stretches our eschatological imagination. Its variety is theologically relevant and salutary. Two questions of fundamental theology have guided me through this interdisciplinary itinerary: how can architecture be theology? What is its specificity in being theology? These questions resulted in my threefold method, based on the transposition of Lefebvre's triad into theology. *Synaesthetic space* examines how architecture, as space and light, addresses the *body* in revealing the sacred in the midst of a secular society. *Kerygmatic space* inquires what architecture, as word and image, tells the *mind* about Christian identity in the midst of a pluralist city. *Eucharistic space* formulated the question how architecture, as dance and garden, puts a *community* into movement towards the Kingdom in the midst of a profane world.

Hence, contemporary church architecture should not easily be dismissed for not lavishly displaying iconography, as some recent publications might suggest.[4] Those reflections still remain stuck in *kergymatic space* alone. The theological value of architecture has much more to do with how people are given space and expansion (*synaesthetic space*) and how they are being

4 For instance, Denis R. McNamara, *Catholic Church Architecture and the Spirit of the Liturgy* (Chicago and Mundelein, IL: Hillenbrand Books, 2009).

oriented and directed, how they are put in movement (*Eucharistic space*). When a contemporary church succeeds in creating the right *expansion, expression*, and *expectation* of the Mystery, it is a valuable specimen of *mystagogic space*. Such a "victory of the Spirit" (Tillich) not only displays a *genius loci.* Its *Spiritus loci* truly gives a foretaste of the Holy Spirit, who reveals Christ, who reveals the Father. As *Temple of the Spirit*, the church leads to the threshold of Christ by gathering the community into *Body of Christ*. This threshold opens up the eternal space of the Father by orienting the community into *People of God*.

Even though it is not essential for the purpose of this book to determine which dimension is chronologically or logically first, the fact is that they are related and distinguishable. I have started with *synaesthetic space* because current discussions on theology and architecture tend to refrain from giving this any importance. For instance, a renowned liturgical scholar claims: "A space is sacred because it fulfills a religious role, not because it has special aesthetic or physical qualities."[5] This unfortunate opposition between the religious and the aesthetic is only true when the former is reduced to the liturgical, and the latter is understood as irreligious. It might overlook the essential *domus Dei*-dimension next to a *domus ecclesiae*-function. Even the Protestant Tillich recognized such a dimension before anything else happens in a place.

Our time is particularly in need of holding the three dimensions together, chiefly in engaging the body in its individual and communitarian sense. Both an unimaginative historicist imitation and a gray Modernist box are platitudes reducing material and bodily depth to what Lefebvre so abhorred as *mental space*. Hence, both extremes sin against sacramental theology. Neither of them provides what our time needs most: materiality in order to retrieve spirituality.

Let me end this itinerary with an atypical, or perhaps most typical, case study: the *Abbey church of Our Lady* at Novy Dvur in the Czech Republic (John Pawson, 2004) (Figs. 6.1 and 6.2). According to Dom Debuyst, it is precisely in such places that the Christian *genius loci* – or *Spiritus loci* – comes to the fore. Here, we not only witness but also participate in simplicity full of mystery, in community and inhabited silence – in sacred emptiness oriented to the Kingdom. Here, we get a glimpse of Schwarz's *Cathedral of all times* when we are attentive to the different moods (*Stimmungen*) that are so dependent from the changing light – abstracted, filtered, condensed cosmos. This *mystagogic space* introduces truly into the Mystery, through its *synaesthetic* qualities of

5 R. Kevin Seasoltz, *A Sense of the Sacred: Theological Foundations of Christian Architecture and Art* (New York: Continuum, 2005), 69.

space and light, its *kerygmatic* marriage of word and image, and its *Eucharistic* dimension of dance and garden. Indeed, the liturgical moves of the monks have something of a precious dance, in which every posture and every gesture is meaningfully prayerful. This 'garden' is a *heterotopia* (Foucault): no place to dwell in continuously, but a different place that, from time to time, prophetically reveals the eschatological depth of the ordinary. A precious, humble, 'kenotic' instrument for focusing upon the essential: truly a *templum Spiritus* of our age, revealing who and where we are.

Pawson's minimalism is a way to say more.[6] Places were monks live their entire lives must accommodate their prescribed forms of discipline, but "should also be about something bigger, less quantifiable and less definable – something that means we don't need to see the altar and the tabernacle to know we are in a sacred place."[7] The British architect John Pawson has succeeded in this endeavor by creating an otherworldly place in the green undulating hills of Eastern Bohemia. After a long trip over smaller and smaller roads, one is finally relieved and surprised to arrive at this white oasis. The monks are warmhearted in their welcome, but complain about the herds of tourists who love to catch them on their cameras like endangered species. The architectural fame is a burden for those who seek silence and simplicity in this inhospitable landscape.[8]

Color is condensed in a polychrome statue of the Virgin of Novy Dvur, masterfully placed on top of a small pillar, behind which the huge white apse

6 This austerity works well for a Cistercian community, but might ask too much of an average parish community. All the monks that I have spoken have witnessed a fondness towards their church.

7 One commentator has observed that "the unfolding narrative of revelation through reduction might be seen to uncover wider truths about architecture of this type – about what it is that you make space for, when you embark on the process of clearing away." Alison Morris, *John Pawson: Plain Space* (London, New York: Phaidon, 2010), 74. She recalls that Pawson's dream list of buildings from 1998 included a church. In 2008, Pawson received a major international award in sacred architecture. This has certainly to do with his well-acclaimed achievement at Novy Dvur, which could not take place if the French abbot did not believe in the spiritual potential of the work of this British architect unknown for his sacred architecture. John Pawson (°1949, Yorkshire) has a Methodist background, and at one (short) point desired to become a Zen Buddhist monk. At this date, he has worked as well at the Cistercian Abbey of Sept Fons, the Benedictine Abbey of Panonhalma in Hungary, and he designed a private chapel in Italy.

8 When crowds get too numerous, their harsh solution is to deny them access to the church during prayer offices. In the future, they will refer visitors to the guest chapel, in which the prayers of the monks will be transmitted in real time through the sound system.

creates dramatic effects of light. Breathing space – sacred emptiness – is filled with a sense of expectation and presence. With spectacular sense of drama, this statue is lit during the Salve Regina at the end of each day (Fig. 6.2). There she stands in warm light and totally surrounded by darkness. “And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.” (Gn 1:5)

Afterword

The following brief reflections are intended most of all to express a deep sympathy with both the profound convictions and the astounding preparatory work that resulted in this book – *Spiritus loci*, the "Spirit of the place" – a simple title with a great density.

For the past twenty years, perhaps, we are witnessing a renewed interest in religious architecture and all that goes with it. Yet, this fact does not mean that a theological dissertation dedicated entirely to contemporary Christian churches can go unnoticed – especially when its major concern and methodology leads us, theologians, to recognize here a kind of foundational place, a real *locus theologicus*.

At Fr. Daelemans's doctoral defense, this is what one could experience: the unexpected feeling of assisting at something new and almost festive. This book deals with a considerable amount of church buildings from the past twenty years, which gives us a vision of the whole. But in reality the discussion of each case study is so thorough and meticulous that it becomes possible to recognize in it a comprehensive survey of architectural modernism as well. This style, born a hundred years ago, is followed here in its paradigmatic examples, major traits, and perhaps most of all in its successive accentuations. These are noticeable in the direct visits to these churches, to which the numerous commented illustrations of this book witness.

Nevertheless, this book provides much more: in short, a methodological and inductive step forward by bringing together different points of view, which helps referring to their main aspects. I must insist, however, that this method never allows us to take distance from the physical presence of the churches themselves. Such presence remains always first: the plurality of many perspectives presented in this book is a constant reminder of this.

The versatile complexity of this book does not get in the way of enjoyable reading. This is possibly due to the guidance of certain key witnesses, emblematic masters or creators of each of the major points of view. For instance, when the author considers and situates the German architect Rudolf Schwarz, I feel at home. Indeed, together with the work of this great architect, prophetic theoretician, and eminently creative theologian and liturgist, appears the era to which he belongs. This era includes great theological educators as Romano Guardini, Heinrich Kahlefeld, Aloys Goergen, and Albert Gerhards, and architects like him but complementary to him, as Emil Steffann and Ottokar Uhl. In the case of Belgium, I would add Marc Dessauvage, Roger Bastin, and Jean Cosse as well.

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I have allowed myself to quote these names because they represent and develop a type of church building whose underlying theology was dominant around the Second Vatican Council, and which the author regroups under the name *domus ecclesiae*, house of the church. This vision gives the living assembly its due by creating a correspondent hospitable architecture, which creates space for both the assembly and the liturgical and Eucharistic Mystery. This perspective has lead to small ecclesial or parish centers that gain in density and complexity, and equally fascinating student chapels that open up to a multiplicity of experiences. All this occurs with an obvious respect for the *genius loci* of the natural or urban environment – which this book calls 'garden' by including the theme of eschatological orientation.

In this book, this perspective engages in a profound dialogue with the other archetype of Christian architecture, the *domus Dei*, with its appeal for transcendence and its more monumental aspect. A sustained, vital dialogue between both poles, be it explicit or implicit, is at the core of this masterful study. The author demonstrates well that both poles are not exclusive, but rather imply – to a greater or lesser extent – the inclusion of their complementary values. As the perfect synthesis is very difficult to find, the play of successive emphases is indispensable. It is entirely correct that for the last twenty years or so (the period chosen by the author) there is a renewed emphasis on the *domus Dei*, and, with it, a recovery of monumentality. It will ever be necessary to take into consideration many different aspects. Personally, I would always have the tendency to include a 'regulating' appeal for *hospitality* – liturgical, for sure, but also plainly human: is it possible to *dwell* really in a church building that is first and foremost a 'sculptural' presence?

This is why I was profoundly pleased to discover among the privileged case studies in this book the Parisian church of *St François de Molitor*, by architect Jean-Marie Duthilleul. It is an eminent church building, dating from 2005. With its humble façade situated directly on the street and its interior fundamentally shaped to accommodate an assembly in the round, with its clearly distinguished liturgical centers and its vast openness to a garden, it is like a major *domus ecclesiae* that has come to full maturity. It is not at all closed in on itself, but opens to a space of light, an "eschatological" space. Hence, the author is entirely right to choose *St François de Molitor* as cover illustration for this book.

Finally, a word on the ecumenical dimension should figure here. This is an important dimension of this book, as its author has collected fruits from his time in Berkeley, California. It was therefore useful and necessary to include, among the key figures of his research, the great theologian Paul Tillich, without doubt the first to reflect on and to publish a "theology of culture." In addition

to the excellent examples of Episcopalian churches figured in this book, I would also include some of the Nordic churches that are among the most remarkable of the Modernist movement. I have been twice to California to meet the American architect Patrick Quinn, who taught at the University of Berkeley, and who created in the years 1960–1970 a series of "house-churches" of great interest.

In these brief reflections, I have tried to express – as 'from memory' – the living impression that I received from both the doctoral defense and from reading this book. Unfortunately, my age does not allow me to engage more deeply in this discussion. Besides, any thorough consideration of such a complex phenomenon is inevitably difficult to manage. I have already said that I found joy in this book: the joy transmitted by the "courage of contemporaneity" and the joy of seeing such a breeze, such a wind of freshness blowing over the theological oceans. This is why this book is a great book.

Dom Frédéric Debuyst, O.S.B.

Theses

1. A theology of church architecture must be above all a theology of *space* for the sake of a divine encounter between persons. Henri Lefebvre's spatial triad, *perceived, conceived*, and *lived space*, is a helpful tool for a theology of architecture, because it is based on a *relational* model of space in contrast to an objectifying container model. A threefold method built on this triad considers aesthetic impact, iconographic and iconoclast meaning, and communitarian use of a church as theologically relevant, and is thus a corrective to approaches that reduce the theological relevance of architecture to what Lefebvre dismissed as *mental space*.
2. The diptych of *synaesthetic space* (space-light) points out the *phenomenological* dimension that *architecture* should not be approached as an object to look at but as an *event* to inhabit. Against the hegemony of vision, architecture lays bare the impact of texture and matter on our *body*. In authentic architectural experience, one becomes aware of being embodied. Matter matters for the spiritual. Specific to *architecture* in inducing a sense of the sacred is the *embodied* nature of architectural experience.
3. The diptych of *kerygmatic space* (word-image) explores the *hermeneutic* dimension of *church* architecture to enter a Mystery with a Name and a Face. Cataphatic iconography and apophatic iconoclasm must be correlated in order for the anonymous 'sacred' not to remain faceless within a church. Specific to *church* architecture within sacred architecture is its kerygmatic relation to the living person of Christ through *expression* or re-presentation rather than through more distant and superficial representation.
4. The diptych of *Eucharistic space* (dance-garden) examines the *eschatological* dimension of *contemporary* church architecture that a church must be 'lived' and *appropriated* by a worshiping community in order to 'sing' about redemption. As such, 'building' starts only when a community plays along with it, and is therefore effective 'community building' with ethical, ecclesiological, and ecological repercussions.
5. Specific to *contemporary* church architecture within the history of sacred architecture is, on the one hand, its playful freedom of shapes and styles, which engage the eschatological imagination for a creative *domus Dei*, and, on the other hand, the diverse heritage of the *domus ecclesiae* of the twentieth century, with its emphasis on the actively worshiping community. As such, a contemporary *templum Spiritus* combines immanence and transcendence for an encounter in the Spirit.

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6. Our age has to find new ways of engaging our contemporaries into doxological and spiritual experiences that relate *directly* (but not necessarily without mediation) to the divine. Architecture at its best creates *spaces of encounter* that are 'victories' of the human and divine spirit (Tillich).
7. One advantage of architecture as non-verbal theology – or *theotopy* – is to implicitly *embody* theological truths rather than explicitly articulating them. Hence, architecture provides a *theotopical experience* in which one has to enter rather than words and concepts that explain and keep one at a distance. Instead of having a merely illustrative role, architecture can thus be a source for theological reflection.
8. *Theotopy* invites pneumatology to think the Holy Spirit as Godspace of encounter. Spatial metaphors permit to think the Spirit as *expansion* of Christ the Light, as *expression* of Christ the Logos, and as *expectation* of Christ the Savior.
9. Specific to *theotopy* is its inductive method. *Theotopy* is developed in particular, specific embodiments of theological truths. These embodiments are human creations. Hence, *theotopy* is a praxis.
10. *Theotopy* invites all architecture (so-called secular architecture included) to excel in its *embodied* and *embedded* character. Architecture has to reveal us our body and our world. These anthropological and cosmological dimensions of architecture are its theological value.

Glossary

Aesthetics	Philosophical science studying art, beauty, and the senses. Famous classical aesthetics are the ones from Baumgarten, Kant, and Hegel. In theology, theological aesthetics is a discipline launched by Hans Urs von Balthasar and emerging especially in the United States. Exponents are Frank Burch Brown, Alejandro García-Rivera, and Richard Viladesau.
Apollinarism	A Christian heresy named after Apollinaris of Laodicea (+390), who argued that Christ did not have a human soul. Hence, Christ would not share our full humanity.
Arianism	A Christian heresy named after the priest Arius of Alexandria (+330), who argued that Christ was subordinate to the Father, a lesser God. Hence, Christ would not share the full divinity of the Father.
Chalcedon	The Council of Chalcedon (451) established the Christological dogma: Christ is one divine Person in two natures, divine and human, which are without confusion, change, division, or separation.
Domus Dei	Lat. house of God. Indicates the transcendent function or atmosphere of a church building. This is typically a Roman Catholic or Orthodox concept. It often refers to more than a *liturgical* function alone, namely to the *sacramental* dimension of a building to evoke God's presence. Often used together with or in contrast to *domus ecclesiae*, in order to express the basic tension in church architecture between *transcendence* and *immanence*.
Domus ecclesiae	Lat. house of the assembly. Indicates the earliest Christian places of worship. The earliest known house church in Dura-Europos (Syria) dates from the early third century. The first mention of a house church is Rm 16:3–5. In the twentieth century, the concept has been recovered in order to focus again on the assembly, together with or in contrast to a *domus Dei* with its focus on transcendence.
Eschatology	Gr. *eschatos* (last) + *logos* (study). Theological discipline of the *eschata* (the last things: traditionally, death, resurrection, the intermediate state, heaven, and hell). Most recently, study of how the *eschaton* (the ultimate, the unconditional, eternity) breaks into time and reveals what is already saved but not yet accomplished. In other words, it shows how and where the Earth lights up as eternal Kingdom.

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Term	Definition
Eucharistic space	Gr. *eu* (well) + *charis* (grace). Building on Lefebvre's concept of lived space, I coined this term in order to indicate the *liturgical* and *eschatological* dimension of *mystagogic space*. This dimension of space is attentive to what happens in a building when a community appropriates the *space* by worshiping in it, day after day. Hence, it is broader than the *space* in which the Roman Catholic Eucharist is celebrated. It indicates rather an *eschatological*, ethical, and cosmological dimension in which the heavenly Kingdom comes to light within earthly *space*. I name it Eucharistic because of the ultimate truth celebrated in the Eucharist: the graced gift of Godself.
Expression	Lat. *ex* (out) + *pressare* (to press, push). In this book, refers to the manifestation or presentation by a reality of another reality, in contrast to (mere) *representation*, which only refers to or stands in for another reality. Architectural philosopher Karsten Harries (1937) spoke of 're-presentation' to indicate that something is made present. Phenomenologist Mikel Dufrenne (1910–1995) made the distinction between the *expressed* world and the *represented* world of a work of art. See also *representation*.
Firmitas	Lat. solidity. See *Vitruvian triad.*
Genius loci	Lit. 'spirit of place.' Antique Roman concept in order to indicate a protective spirit dwelling in a certain place with a special atmosphere or character.
Hapax legomenon	(Gr. said once) A unique word that occurs only once in a text.
Haptic	In plural, this substantive refers to non-verbal sensory experience in general. In singular, this adjective designates the experience gained through the sense of touch in particular.
Hermeneutics	Gr. *hermeneuo* (to interpret). Philosophical discipline that studies text interpretation. Famous exponents are Hans-Georg Gadamer and Paul Ricoeur.
Heterotopia	Gr. *heteros* (different) + *topos* (place). Term coined by the French philosopher Michel Foucault (1926–1984) to describe places of otherness, which express difference in a society, such as hospitals, prisons, cemeteries, boarding schools, saunas, and ships. They are prophetically critical in relation to ordinary places. In contrast to utopias, heterotopias are real, physical places.
Iconography	Gr. *eikon* (image) + *graphein* (to write). Branch of art history that studies images. In this book, it indicates all the imagery in a church building, such as crosses, statuary, furniture, and paintings.

Immanence	See *transcendence*.
Incarnation	A central dogma in Christian theology, affirming that the Word of God became flesh and was born of the Virgin Mary.
Kerygmatic space	Gr. *kerygma* (proclamation). Kerygma refers to Jesus' programmatic discourse in the synagogue in Nazareth (Lk 4:18). Building on Lefebvre's concept of conceived space, I coined this term to indicate that dimension of church *space* that addresses the mind with words, signs, symbols, and images. It is concerned with how a church building proclaims the Gospel, apart from its *synaesthetic* and *Eucharistic* dimensions.
Liminality	Lat. *limen* (threshold). Stage during initiation rituals where one neither belongs to the pre-ritual nor to the post-ritual status. Hence, it is a transition stage in-between two different social groups. This concept was developed by the anthropologists Arnold van Gennep and Victor Turner.
Liturgy	Gr. *laos* (people) + *ergon* (work). Christian worship in a church building by a community. In this book, I have focused most of all on the Eucharistic liturgy, that is, what happens in a church building during Sunday worship. It not only refers to the 'work of the people' but also the work that shapes a group of people into a community. Hence, people receive their identity as people through the liturgy. Liturgy is "not the sacristy, but the sacredness of things." (Cassingena-Trévedy)
Modernism	Architectural style based on functional, 'honest' (that is, undecorated) use of modern materials such as concrete, glass, and steel by rejecting ornament and historical styles, and a rationalism in design, which often translates into rectangularity. Exponents are Le Corbusier, Walter Gropius, and Ludwig Mies van der Rohe.
Mystagogic space	Gr. *mystagogia* (introduction into the mysteries). I coined this term in order to indicate the relational *space* at work in a church building. It refers to the way a building (in its three dimensions of *synaesthetic, kerygmatic,* and *Eucharistic*) introduces into God's *mystery*. In narrow sense, mystagogy also refers to post-baptismal catechesis. In broad sense, I refer to Maximus the Confessor, *The Church's Mystagogy*.
Mystery	Refers in this book to God's mystery of *immanence* and *transcendence*, presence and absence. In this book, it is not so much intra-trinitarian as it is related to us. Hence, God's mystery indicates the mystery of God's relationship with us.
Narthex	Lobby area located at the entrance of a church, but no part of the worship space. Originally it was the place for catechumens and

	penitents not allowed to participate in the Eucharist. Common in early and medieval basilicas, it now regains importance in contemporary church architecture.
Pelagianism	A Christian heresy named after the monk Pelagius (+420), who argued that it was sufficient for salvation that Jesus Christ was a mere model to be followed. Perfection could be attained by human nature without the need of divine grace. St Augustine vehemently critiqued this position, and won.
Phenomenology	Gr. *phaenomenon* (what appears) + *logos* (study). Philosophical science founded by Edmund Husserl (1859–1938) that studies the structures of consciousness and experience in reference to what appears. Husserl desired a return to 'the things themselves' (*die Sache selbst*) through the technique of *reduction*, away from the impasse between subjectivity and objectivity. Famous phenomenologists of the French school interested in phenomenological *aesthetics* are Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Mikel Dufrenne, and Jean-Luc Marion. In architecture, phenomenology indicates the field of academic research into the sensory experience of built space. Famous thinkers and architects are Martin Heidegger, Dalibor Vesely, Christian Norberg-Schulz, Steven Holl, Juhani Pallasmaa, and Alberto Pérez-Gómez.
Place	A meaningful location (Tuan, Casey). See also *space*.
Profane	Lat. *pro* (in front of, before) + *fanum* (temple). Formerly, opposed to and separated from the *sacred*. Nowadays, the dialectic between *sacred* and profane is not understood as separation but as distinction. That does not mean that anything is automatically *sacred*, but that nothing is excluded from the *sacred*. For an anthropological study of this dialectic in many cultures and religions, see Mircea Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion*, trans. Willard R. Trask (New York: Harper & Row, 1961). See also *sacred*.
Reduction	*Phenomenological* technique that allows one to know by astonishment. It includes bracketing or suspensing all inquiry and judgement about the existence of a certain reality in order to focus only on how it appears as phenomenon. It can be compared to radical meditation in which the whole person is involved.
Representation	In this book, the use of signs that stand for and refer to something else, in contrast to *expression*. See also *expression*.
Sacramental	In narrow sense, adjective that characterizes everything that refers to Christian sacraments (e.g. Baptism) or sacramentals (e.g. benediction). In broad sense, it refers to a perspective able to perceive anything as *sacred*.

Sacred	Term that characterizes any reality that refers to the holy, divine, transcendent mystery but is not holy in itself. See also *profane*.
Saturated phenomenon	Term coined by the French phenomenologist Jean-Luc Marion in order to indicate that some phenomena give more than what actually appears. They are 'saturated' or 'in excess.' His four basic types of saturated phenomena are event, idol, flesh, and icon. The world appears saturated as event, the visible as idol, the self as flesh, and the other as icon. A fifth type is Christian Revelation.
Semiotics	Gr. *semeion* (sign). Linguistic science studying signs.
Space	There are two main definitions of space: physical and relational. Physical space is boundless extent in which objects have their relative position. Its common mathematical model is tridimensional (x, y, z). Next to physical space as container (Aristoteles), space could be a relational concept implying people (Löw, Lefebvre). Space is related to *place*: on the one hand, a *place* concretizes abstract space (Casey); on the other hand, space is 'practiced *place*' (de Certeau). I have called this space *mystagogic* in the case of church buildings, and distinguished between its *synaesthetic*, *kerygmatic*, and *Eucharistic* dimensions. See also *place*.
Spiritus loci	Lit. 'spirit of place.' I coined this term in order to indicate the relationship between the Holy Spirit and architecture. This concept goes beyond the more general *genius loci* in making explicit the Name and the Face of the Christian God.
Synaesthetic space	Gr. *syn* (together) + *aisthesis* (sensation). Building on Lefebvre's concept of perceived space, I coined this term in order to indicate the multi-sensory atmosphere of a certain building. This *space* is invisible and only perceived through the use of the bodily senses together, through the 'eyes of the skin' (Pallasmaa), as if the body were attentive to its surroundings. I prefer to denote such space as synaesthetic rather than multi-sensory in order to highlight the unity and wholeness of this experience that has nothing to do with a plurality. Synaesthesia is the neurological phenomenon in which one sensory experience is automatically linked to another. Most common form is the grapheme/color synaesthesia, in which numbers or letters involuntary

	are perceived as colored always in the same way (e.g. an 'A' is always perceived as green). Similarly, in synaesthetic space there is no point in trying to dissociate colors from light or texture.
Templum Spiritus	Lat. temple of the Spirit. I coined this term in relation to both *domus Dei* and *domus ecclesiae*. It indicates what a church building must be, if the Spirit is understood as the personal and relational *space* of encounter between God and humanity.
Theotopy	Gr. *theos* (God) + *topos* (place). I have coined this term in parallel to theology in order to indicate the non-verbal theology, or reflection about our relationship with God, of architecture.
Topography	Gr. *topos* (place) + *graphein* (to write). Planetary science that studies the surface shapes of the Earth, or the surface shapes themselves. Used in this book more literally as everything that shapes a certain place in order to give it a specific character.
Transcendence	Often used together with and in contrast to *immanence*, this term indicates that God is beyond our physical world, whereas *immanence* indicates that God is present within this world. These terms are not mutually exclusive. In Christian theology, they indicate the basic tension of our relationship with God, who is near (immanent) and at the same time beyond all our expectations (transcendent). St Augustine formulated this as *Deus intimior intimo mio et superior summo meo* (God closer to me than I am to myself and higher than my highest self). Applied to architecture, *transcendence* and *immanence* refer to the tension between *domus Dei* and *domus ecclesiae*, between the focus on God beyond all things and the focus on the presence of God within the worshiping community.
Utilitas	Lat. utility. See *Vitruvian triad*.
Venustas	Lat. beauty. See *Vitruvian triad*.
Vitruvian triad	Classic statement about architecture, by the Roman architect Marcus Vitruvius Pollio (80–15 BC) who became famous for his treatise *De Architectura*. The triad – *firmitas, venustas, utilitas* – indicates that any building must combine solidity, beauty, and utility.

Index of Church Buildings (1915–2015)

From the theological question of immanence and transcendence, I discern church types between *domus Dei*, *domus ecclesiae*, and *templum Spiritus.* Whereas the first tends to emphasize transcendence, the second privileges immanence, and the latter is what a contemporary church should be, balancing transcendence and immanence. Such balance must be found in the three dimensions, *synaesthetic*, *kerygmatic*, and *Eucharistic*, addressing the body, the mind, and the community. A church is a *templum Spiritus* when it draws the visitor not only into the Mystery of God (*domus Dei*), but of the community as well (*domus ecclesiae*). Contemporary Roman Catholic prototypes are *Herz Jesu* in Munich (*domus Dei*) (Fig. 1.3), *Herz Jesu* in Völklingen (*domus ecclesiae*) (Fig. 4.6), and *Christus Hoffnung der Welt* in Vienna (Fig. 5.1) or *St François de Molitor* in Paris (Fig. 5.6) (*templum Spiritus*). I build my typology upon Kieckhefer's distinction between *classic sacramental* (longitudinal, processional, dramatic), *classic evangelical* (dignified and edified hearing), and *modern communal* (transitional, flexible, hospitable) church types. From the point of view of immanence and transcendence, both Kieckhefer's evangelical and communal churches underline immanence and can thus be categorized under *domus ecclesiae*.

A chapel is first of all addressed to the individual pilgrim, and must therefore excel in *synaesthetic* qualities. A cathedral is first of all a written message, and must therefore display *kerygmatic* qualities. Parish and monastic churches are in the first place *Eucharistic* spaces for gathered communities. It is essential to distinguish between parish and monastic churches. In order to be a *templum Spiritus*, a parish church must be first and foremost a *domus ecclesia*, a monastic church a *domus Dei.* Good examples are the churches at Donaucity and Novy Dvur (Fig. 6.2). But both must hold balances between *domus Dei* and *domus ecclesiae.*

Different communities have different needs. People have also different needs at distinct periods of their lives. Therefore, it is essential to distinguish between Roman Catholic and Protestant churches, and between parish and monastic churches.

It is remarkable that most recent Protestant churches are longitudinal in spatial dynamics, opting for the conference hall-type for dignified and edified hearing. This corresponds to Kieckhefer's *classic evangelical* type. In contrast, Roman Catholic churches explore other liturgical configurations for community building, and search for creating an architecture of transcendence on the basis of the acquisitions of the twentieth-century *domus ecclesiae* (most prominent are the configurations that Schwarz named *open ring*).

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In the following index, I have listed major church buildings of the two last decades (1995–2015), according to their typology (chapels, cathedrals, monastic churches, parish churches), location, Christian denomination, and chronology, albeit without exhaustivity. I have indicated the six major case studies in bold. For twenty of them, I have added a technical sheet and applied my method in a Practical Guide (PG). Because contemporary church architecture is a direct heir of twentieth century "architecture of immanence," I have preceded the main index by a list of illustrious twentieth century precursors.

Illustrious Precursors 1895–1995

Germany

1. *Fronleichnamskirche* (*Corpus Christi*), Aachen (Rudolf Schwarz, 1930) (Fig. 2.1)
2. *Auferstehungskirche*, Essen (Otto Bartning, 1930)
3. *St Laurentius*, Munich-Gern (Emil Steffann, 1955) (Fig. 2.2)

France

4. *Pilgrim Chapel Notre-Dame-du-Haut*, Ronchamp (Le Corbusier, 1955) (Fig. 2.3)

Great Britain

5. *Coventry Cathedral*, Coventry (Basil Spence, 1962)
6. *Roman Catholic Cathedral*, Liverpool (Frederick Gibberd, 1967)
7. *Fitzwilliam College Chapel*, Cambridge (Richard MacCormac, 1991)
8. *St Paul's Church*, Harringay (Peter Inskipp, Peter Jenkins, 1993)

Ireland

9. *Corpus Christi Church*, Knockanure (Michael Scott, 1964)
10. *St Aengus Church*, Burt (McCormick, Corr, 1967)

Netherlands

11. *Benedictine Abbey Church*, Vaals (Dom Hans Van der Laan, 1968)

Sweden

12. *St Mark's Church*, Stockholm-Malmovag (Sigurd Lewerentz, 1960)

Finland

13. *Technical University Chapel*, Otaniemi (Heikki and Kaija Siren, 1956)

Switzerland

14. *Chapel of St Benedict*, Sumvitg (Peter Zumthor, 1989)
15. *Chapel*, Oberrealta (Christian Kerez, Fontana & Partner AG, 1993)

Hungary

16. *Lutheran Church*, Siofok (Imre Makovecz, 1990)
17. *Roman Catholic Holy Spirit Church*, Paks (Imre Makovecz, 1991)

Spain

18. *Sagrada Familia*, Barcelona (Antoni Gaudí, 1882–…)

Italy

19. *Church at Riola di Vergato*, Bologna (Alvar Aalto, 1968)

United States

20. *Unity Temple*, Oak Park, IL (Frank Lloyd Wright, 1906)
21. *First Church of Christ Scientist*, Berkeley, CA (Bernard Maybeck, 1912)
22. *Chapel Saint Savior at IIT*, IL (Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, 1952)
23. *Kresge Chapel at MIT*, Cambridge, MA (Eero Saarinen, 1955)
24. *St. John's Abbey and University Church*, Collegeville, MN (Marcel Breuer, 1961)
25. *Cistercian Our Lady of Redwoods Monastery*, Whitethorn, CA (1967)
26. *Thorncrown Chapel*, Eureka Springs, AR (Fay Jones, 1980)
27. *Crystal Cathedral*, Garden Grove, CA (Philip Johnson, 1980)
28. *Abbey Church of Our Lady of Dallas*, Dallas, TX (Gary Cunningham, 1992)

Latin America

29. *São Francisco de Assis*, Pampulha, Brasil (Oscar Niemeyer, 1947)
30. *Convent Chapel in Colonia Tlalpan*, Mexico City, Mexico (Luis Barragán, 1952–1955)
31. *Church at Atlanida*, Uruguay (Eladio Dieste, 1958)
32. *Metropolitan Cathedral Nossa Senhora Aparecida*, Brasilia, Brasil (Oscar Niemeyer, 1959–1970)
33. *Metropolitan Cathedral*, Managua, Nicaragua (Ricardo Legorreta, 1993)

Japan

34. *Chapel on Mount Rokko* (Tadao Ando, 1986)
35. *Church on the Water*, Tomamu, Hokkaido (Tadao Ando, 1988)
36. *Church of the Light*, Ibaraki, Osaka (Tadao Ando, 1989)
37. *Protestant Church*, Tarumi, Kobe (Tadao Ando, 1993)

Chapels (1995–2015)

Belgium

1. *Notre-Dame de l'espérance*, Louvain-la-Neuve (Bodeux & Libbrecht, 2004)
2. *Dominican Chapel*, Louvain-la-Neuve (AGDA (Benoît Gillon, Géry Despret, 2010) (Fig. 1.1))
3. *Kapel van de ontluiking*, Groot-Bijgaarden (Tom Callebaut, tcct, 2011) (Fig. 1.2)
4. *Pilgrim Chapel*, Westvleteren (Bob Van Reeth, 2012 (Fig. 3.1))

Netherlands

5. *Funeral Chapel of St Mary of the Angels*, Rotterdam (Mecanoo, 2000)

Great Britain

6. *Anglican Bishop Edward King Chapel,* Ripon College, Cuddesdon (Niall McLaughlin, 2013)

Germany

7. *Winter Adoration Chapel,* Benedictine Abbey of Ettal (Claus + Forster, 1998)
8. *Protestant Chapel of Reconciliation*, Berlin (Rudolf Reitermann, Peter Sassenroth, 2000) (Figs. 3.2–3.5)
9. *Evangelische Autobahnkirche*, Medenbach (Hans Waechter, 2001) (PG 13)
10. *Adoration Chapel in Haus der Stille*, Meschede (Peter Kulka, 2001)
11. *Beichtkapelle im Kloster Frauenberg,* Fulda (Ollertz & Ollertz, 2002)
12. *Field Chapel of Bruder Klaus,* Mechernich-Wachendorf (Peter Zumthor, 2007) (Fig. 1.9)
13. *Field Chapel of St Benedict*, Kolbermoor (Kunze Seeholzer, 2007)
14. *Field Chapel*, Buchen-Bödigheim (IIT Chicago, with Ecker Architekten, 2009)
15. *Autobahnkirche Siegerland*, Wilnsdorf, A45 Ausfahrt 23 (Schneider + Schumacher, (Figs. 2.12–2.13)

Switzerland

16. *Chapel of Santa Maria degli Angeli*, Monte Tamaro (Mario Botta, 1996)
17. *Chapel of San Giovanni Battista*, Mogno (Mario Botta, 1996)

Czech Republic

18. *Chapel Mary in the Snow*, Hrusky (Z. Bures, 2006)
19. *Protestant Chapel of the Brethren*, Cernosice (Franek Zdenek, 2010 (Fig. 2.11))

Finland

20. *St Henry's Ecumenical Art Chapel*, Turku (Sanakenaho, 2008)

21. *Chapel of St Lawrence*, Vantaa (Avanto Architects, 2010)
22. *Kamppi Chapel*, Helsinki (Kimmo Lintula, Niko Sirola, Mikko Summanen, 2012)

Poland

23. *Chapel*, Tarnów (Beton, 2010)

Spain

24. *Jesuit Retreat Chapel*, Navas del Marqués (Ruíz Barbarín, 2000)
25. *Private Chapel*, Valleacerón (Juan Carlos Sancho Osinaga, Sol Madridejos Fernández, 2001)

Portugal

26. *Santo Ovidio Estate Chapel*, Douro (Álvaro Siza, 2001)
27. *Capela de Santa Filomena*, Figueira da Foz (Pedro Mauricio Borges, 2008)
28. *Netos Chapel*, Netos (Pedro Maurício Borges, 2009)
29. *Capela Santa Ana*, Santa Maria da Feira (e348 arquitectura, Póvoa de Varzim, 2009)

United States

30. *Yancey Chapel*, Sawyerville, Alabama (Samuel Mockbee, Rural Studio, 1996)
31. *Chapel of St. Ignatius,* Seattle, WA (Steven Holl, 1997) (Figs. 3.6–3.8)
32. *Dominican Chapel of Our Lady of the Rosary*, Sparkill, NY (Martin Holub, 1998–2001)
33. *Holy Rosary Catholic Oratory*, Saint Amant, Louisiana (Trey Trahan, 2004)
34. *Bigelow Chapel*, United Theological Seminary, New Brighton, MN (Hammel, Green and Abrahamson, Inc. (Joan M. Soranno, John Cook, Steven Dwyer), 2004)
35. *Prayer Pavilion of Light*, Phoenix, Arizona (DeBartolo, 2007)
36. *St. Katharine Drexel Chapel*, Xavier University, Louisiana (Cesar Pelli, 2012)

Japan

37. *Leaf Chapel*, Kobuchizawa (Klein Dytham, 2004)
38. *Setre Chapel*, Kobe (Ryuichi Ashizawa, 2005)
39. *White Chapel*, Osaka (Jun Aoki, 2006)
40. *Chapel in Hiromine*, Himeji City (Ryuichi Ashizawa, 2009)

Latin America

41. *Los Nogales School Chapel*, Bogotá, Colombia (Daniel Bonilla, 2002)
42. *El Roble Chapel*, Coelemu, Bío-Bío, Chile (57 Studio, 2003)

43. *Chapel at Porciuncula de la Milagrosa*, La Calera, Bogotá, Colombia (Daniel Bonilla, 2004)
44. *Brennand Chapel*, Recife, Brazil (Paulo Mendes da Rocha, 2006)
45. *Chapel Fuente Nueva*, Rupanco, Chile (F3 Arquitectos, 2006)
46. *La Estancia Chapel*, Cuernavaca, Morelos, México (Bunker Arquitectos, 2008)
47. *Church-Ita*, Talca, Chile (Supersudaka, 2008)
48. *Junquillos Chapel*, Junquillos, Biobío, Chile (Baladrón & Grass, 2009)
49. *Pilgrim Chapel del Retiro*, Auco, Chile (Undurraga Devés, 2009)

Cathedrals and Vast Pilgrimage Places (1995–2015)

1. *Cathedral of the Resurrection*, Évry, France (Mario Botta, 1995) (Figs. 0.1, 1.6)
2. *Russian Orthodox Cathedral of Christ the Savior*, Moscow, Russia (rebuilt 2000)
3. *Cathedral of Our Lady of Guadalupe*, Dodge City, Kansas, USA (RD Habiger, 1995–2001)
4. *Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels,* Los Angeles, CA (Rafael Moneo, 2002) (Figs. 4.10–4.12)
5. *Padre Pio Pilgrimage Church*, San Giovanni Rotondo, Italy (Renzo Piano, 2004)
6. *Pilgrimage Church of the Santíssima Trindade*, Fátima, Portugal (Alexandros N. Tombazis, Paulo Santos, 2007)
7. *Cathedral of Christ the Light*, Oakland, CA (Craig Hartman, 2008) (Figs. 0.2, 3.10, 4.1, 4.8–4.9, 5.15)
8. Cathedral of Our Lady, Créteil, France (Architecture Studio, 2015)

Monastic Churches (1995–2015)

1. *St Catherine of Siena*, Dominican Nuns, Drogheda, co. Louth, Ireland (1997)
2. Cistercian church of *La-Paix-Dieu*, Cabanoule, France (Jean Cosse, 1998)
3. *Church of the Virgin Mary Victorious* (*Kostel Panny Marie Vítezné*) Moravsky Zizkov, Czech Republic (Jilji Sindlar, Petra Zalmanova, 2000–2002)
4. *Abbey Church of Novy Dvur*, Plzen, Czech Republic (John Pawson, 2004) (Figs. 6.1–6.2)
5. *Onze-Lieve-Vrouw van het Fiat*, Opgrimbie, Belgium (2004)
6. *Mariakloster*, Tautra, Norway (Jensen & Skodvin Arkitektkontor, 2006)

7. *Val Notre-Dame Abbey Church*, St. Jean de Matha, Québec, Canada (Pierre Thibault, 2009)
8. *Poor Clare Monastery*, Ronchamp, France (Renzo Piano, 2011)

Parish Churches (1995–2015)

Roman Catholic

France

1. *Notre-Dame d'Espérance*, Paris XIe (Bruno Legrand, 1997 (Fig. 5.9))
2. *Notre-Dame de l'Arche d'Alliance*, Paris XVe (Architecture Studio, 1998) (Figs. 4.15–4.16)
3. *St Luc*, Paris XIXe (Montel, 1998 (Fig. 5.13))
4. *Notre-Dame de la Sagesse*, Paris XIIe (Faloci, 1999 (Fig. 2.6))
5. *Notre-Dame de Pentecôte*, Paris-La Défense (Franck Hammoutène, 2000 (Fig. 5.8))
6. *St François de Molitor*, Paris XVIe (Corinne Callies, Jean-Marie Duthilleul, 2005) (Figs. 5.6–5.7, 5.11)
7. *Notre-Dame du Rosaire*, Lilas, Seine-Saint-Denis (Agence Enia, 2011 (Fig. 2.4))
8. *St Thomas*, Vaulx-en-Velin (SIZ-IX Architectes, 2012)
9. St Paul-de-la-Plaine, Saint-Denis (Patrick Berger, Jacques Anziutti, 2014)

Belgium

10. *St Paulus* (*Katholische Gemeinde Deutscher Sprache*), Brussels (Catherine De Bie, Florence Cosse, Leo Zogmayer, 2001 (Fig. 5.10))
11. *St Ghislenus*, Waarschoot (Bureau Stramien, 2007)

Germany

12. *St Bonifatius*, Friedrichsdorf-Seulberg (Hoechstetter und partner, 1995) (PG 2)
13. *St Maximilian Kolbe*, Heilbronn-Sontheim (Peter Cheret, Jelena Bozic, Architekten BDA DWB, 1997)
14. *St Marien*, Neu-Anspach (Hahn Helten Architekten, 1998) (PG 4)
15. *St Josef der Arbeiter*, Wolfratshausen-Waldram (Claus + Forster, 1998) (PG 5)
16. *St Thomas von Aquin*, Berlin-Mitte (Thomas Höger, Sarah Hare, 1999) (PG 6)
17. *St Maximilian Kolbe*, Bad Lippspringe (Kresings Architekten, 1999) (PG 7)
18. *Jesus Christus, der gute Hirte*, Frankfurt-Nieder-Erlenbach (Günter Pfeifer, 2000) (PG 8) (Fig. 2.7)
19. *Herz Jesu*, München-Neuhausen (Allmann, Scattler, Wappner, 2000) (PG 9) (Fig. 1.3)

20. *Herz Jesu*, Völklingen-Ludweiler (Lamott Architekten, 2001) (PG 14) (Fig.4.6)
21. *Christus König*, Radebeul (Günter Behnisch, 2001)
22. *St Canisius*, Berlin-Charlottenburg (Heike Büttner, Claus Neumann, George Braun, 2002) (PG 15) (Figs. 2.5, 4.4)
23. *St Johannes Baptist*, Leopoldshöhe, Kreis Lippe (Dieter G. Baumewerd, 2002)
24. *St Theodor*, Köln-Vingst (Paul Böhm, 2002) (PG 16) (Figs. 1.7–1.8)
25. *St Katharina von Siena*, Köln-Blumenberg (Nikolaus Bienefeld, 2003) (PG 17)
26. *Heilig-Kreuz*, Grebenau (Markus Kollmann, 2003) (PG 18)
27. *St Franziskus*, Regensburg-Burgweinting (Königs Architekten, 2004) (Fig. 5.14)
28. *St Florian*, München-Riem (Florian Nagler, 2005) (Fig. 4.13)
29. *Allerheiligste Dreifaltigkeit*, Frankfurt-am-Main (Kissler, Effgen, 2005)
30. *St Peter*, Wenzenbach (Peter and Christian Brückner, 2005) (Figs. 3.9, 4.2)
31. *St Nikolaus*, München-Neuried (Andreas Meck, 2008) (Fig. 4.14)
32. *St Bonifatius*, Ansbach-Dietenhofen (Karl Frey, 2009)
33. *St Marienkirche*, Schillig (Königs Architekten, 2012)

Austria

34. *Christus Hoffnung der Welt*, Wien-Donaucity (Heinz Tesar, 2000) (Fig. 5.1, PG 10)
35. *St Franziskus*, Steyr (Riepl Riepl, 2001) (Fig. 4.7)
36. *Pfarrzentrum*, Podersdorf am See (Lichtblau Wagner, 2002)
37. *Kirche vom Erbarmen Gottes*, Oberrohrbach (Schermann & Stolfa, 2007)

Switzerland

38. *St Franziskus*, Uetikon am See (Daniele Marques, 2008)

Czech Republic

39. *St Prokop*, Prague-Nové Butovice (Zdenek Jiran, Michal Kohout, 2001 (Fig. 1.5))

Hungary

40. *St Stephen*, Százhalmobatta (Imre Makovecz, 1998)

Italy

41. *Jubilee Church*, Rome (Richard Meier, 2003) (Fig. 6.1) (Figs. 2.8–2.9)
42. *Papa Giovanni XXIII*, Bergamo-Paderno-Seriate (Mario Botta, 2004)
43. *San Giovanni Battista*, Lecce (Franco Purini, Laura Thermes, 2006)
44. *Santo Volto*, Turin (Mario Botta, 2006)
45. *Beata Vergine di Loreto*, Bergamo (Gregotti International, 2006)
46. *Santa Famiglia di Nazareth*, San Sisto (Glauco and Roberto Gresleri, 2006)
47. *Santa Maria*, San Giuliano Milanese (Roberto Gabetti, Aimaro Isola, 2006)
48. *Gesú Maestro*, Potenza (Vincenzo Melluso, 2006)

49. *Il Redentore*, Modena (Mauro Galantino, 2008)
50. *San Paolo*, Foligno (Massimiliano and Doriana Fuksas, 2009) (Figs. 1.4, 5.12)

Spain

51. *San Juan de Avila*, Alcalá de Henares (Eladio Dieste, 1998)
52. *Nuestra Señora de Belén*, Alcalá de Henares (Eladio Dieste, 1999)
53. *Santa Mónica*, Rivas Vaciamadrid (Ignacio Vicens, José Antonio Ramos, 2008)
54. *Iesu*, Riberas de Loiola (José Rafael Moneo, 2011)

Portugal

55. *Santa Maria*, Marco de Canaveses (Álvaro Siza Vieira, 1996)
56. *San Antonio*, Portalegre (João Luis Carrilho da Graça, 2008)

United States

57. *St Jean-Marie Vianney*, Baton Rouge (Trahan Architects, 2000)
58. *St Martha*, Harvey (Eskew, Dumez, Ripple, 2003)

Canada

59. *St Gabriel*, Toronto (Roberto Chiotti, 2007)

Protestant

Germany

60. *Versöhnungskirche*, Moosburg an der Isar (Ute Grindl, 2000)
61. *Kirchenzentrum*, Hannover-Kronsberg (Bernhard Hirche, 2000) (PG 11)
62. *Kirche zu Wartenberg*, Berlin-Hohenschönhausen (MEP 2000) (PG 12)
63. *Pauluskirche*, Köln (Kister, Scheithauer, Gross, 2003)
64. *Markuskirche*, Frankfurt-am-Main (Pfeifer, Roser, Kuhn, 2005)
65. *St Jakob*, Frankfurt-am-Main (Gottstein, 2005)
66. *Auferstehungskirche*, Wolnzach (Claus + Forster, 2008) (PG 20)
67. *Reformierten Kirche*, Dornach (Guignard Sanier, 2008)
68. *Dornbusch Kirche*, Frankfurt-am-Main (Meixner, Schlüter, Wendt, 2008)
69. *Methodistische Kirche*, Kloten (Guignard Sanier, 2009)

Austria

70. *Protestant Church*, Klosterneuburg (Heinz Tesar, 1995) (PG 1)
71. *Martin-Luther-Kirche*, Hainburg an der Donau (Coop Himmelb(l)au, 2011)

Switzerland

72. *New Apostolic Church*, Gränichen (Dürig Ag, 2006)

Great Britain

73. *Lumen Church*, London-Bloomsbury (Theis and Kahn, 2008 (Courtenay Theobald, 1966)) (Figs. 1.10, 4.5)

Finland

74. *Kärsämäki Church*, Kärsämäki (Lassila Hirvilammi, 2004)
75. *Viiki Church*, Helsinki (JKMM Architects, 2005)

Norway

76. *Church*, Oslo-Mortensrud (Jensen + Skodvin, 2002)

Japan

77. *Paper Church*, Kobe, Japan (Shigeru Ban, 1995)
78. *Protestant Church*, Tokyo-Harajuku (Ciel Rouge, 2005)

China

79. *Christian Church*, Beijing-Zhongguancun (Meinhard von Gerkan, Stephan Schütz, Marg, 2006)

Episcopalian

United States

80. *St. Gregory of Nyssa Episcopal Church*, San Francisco, CA (John Goldman, 1995) (Figs. 5.2–5.5)

Ecumenical

Germany

81. *St Maria Magdalena*, Freiburg-Rieselfeld (Kister, Scheithauer, Gross, 2004) (PG 19)

A Practical Guide to Twenty Contemporary Churches

In addition to the six major case studies, I apply my threefold method to twenty European (mostly German) parish churches listed in the Index of Church Buildings. I treat them chronologically. The technical sheet of each building includes the architect, the end date of the construction, further bibliography, and a small description of their threefold spaces. Naturally, such a personal application of the threefold method intends to be suggestive rather than exhaustive. Another person will indicate other clues: that is precisely what mystagogic space is about. Hence, the brief notes presented here are intended as provocative eye-openers rather than as decisive conclusions.

1. ***Evangelische Kirche*, Wien-Klosterneuburg, Austria, 1995**

Architect	Heinz Tesar
Location	Franz-Rumpler-Str. 14 (A14 North of Vienna)
Contact	Pf. Heidi and Julian Sartorius; +431 2243 32411; www.evang-klosterneuburg.at
Bibliography	*Wöhler, 150–151; AF 222–223; EK 92-93, 294–297*

Synaesth. space — *Exterior.* The small oval chapel, painted white, stands in the garden of the existing rectory and is oriented to the East. *Interior.* After passing the darker narthex, one is bathed in light. The gray undulating ceiling is regularly pierced by 25 circular openings, and the white plastered wall, especially to the South, by multiple square windows (1×1 m^2) in a playful musical rhythm. The sanctuary receives additional indirect light from the North. A circular organ gallery is situated above the entrance and can be reached by a stairway along the northern wall. The floor is clad in Untersberg marble tiles. The chapel's sensual treatment of light and curved shapes have been characterized as "propagandistic Baroque" in contrast to the "Protestant resistance" of Tesar's Roman Catholic Donaucity-church (AF 92–93).

Kerygm. space — *Outside.* Ship. Chapel on a hill. A metallic cross stands behind the closed apse wall, only visible from the outside and proclaiming Christian identity to the street. *Inside.* Preaching hall. The central altar-table and pulpit are one. A large vertical painting (2×6 m^2) from Hubert Scheibl hangs behind this central focus

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of the Word. The organ gallery represents its counter focus of Music. A few houseplants bring coziness into the place.

EUCH. SPACE The wooden chairs are longitudinally placed in rows oriented towards the sanctuary on one step. The church is East oriented. The small oval plan is compact and intimate, emphasizing the gathered community.

2. *St Bonifatius*, Friedrichsdorf-Seulberg, Germany, 1995

ARCHITECT HOECHSTETTER UND PARTNER
Location Ostpreußenstr. 33a
Contact R.F. Werner Meuer; +49 6172 777 751; www.bonifatius-friedrichsdorf.de
Bibliography *Wöhler, 72–73*

SYNAESTH. SPACE Rectangular box of red brick walls with light metallic ceiling, providing an airy but functional atmosphere, being not much more than a meeting hall. The brick and steel building complex has a functional outlook.

KERYGM. SPACE Behind the solid cube altar-table in white concrete, the chapel of the Blessed Sacrament is shed in blue light due to the blue windows. A huge cross in gold is fixed behind the altar-table. The ambo has a triangular form, whereas the tabernacle is set into a cylinder.

EUCH. SPACE Rows of chairs form a longitudinal *way*-church.

3. *Santa Maria,* Marco de Canaveses, Portugal, 1996

ARCHITECT ÁLVARO SIZA VIEIRA
Location Av. Gago Coutinho
Contact +351 255 522 995
Bibliography *AF 246-247; CB 202; CCA 162; EK 200; SB 106–107; Chroniques d'Art Sacré 64 (2000): 14–15.*

SYNAESTH. SPACE *Exterior.* White modernist box, which reminds of Schwarz's *Fronleichnamskirche*. Architectural purity. Solidity, clarity, transparency. Stoic and vital (SB). *Interior.* Indirectly lit from three high windows in the northwest wall, which curves massively inwards. The sanctuary corners are convexly curved into contemporary 'apses.' To the south, a horizontal strip (16 × 0.50 m^2).

KERYGM. SPACE Modernist iconoclasm at the opposite of the contemporaneous richly decorated *St Gregory of Nyssa*. Frampton has called Siza together with Ando "the twin magi of the late modern

movement." (*Labour, Work, and Architecture* (London: Phaidon, 2002), 257) *Outside.* No exterior Christian signs – not even a bell tower. The entrance interprets the towers and portal of a Gothic cathedral anew, with tall central doors (3 × 10 m^2) flanked by two tall white 'twin towers'. *Inside.* This motive is repeated in two rectangular windows behind the central white marble altar-table, evoking mystery. A wooden cross stands to the side.

EUCH. SPACE Longitudinal *way*-church filled with chairs. Wooden chairs are oriented towards the sanctuary on three steps, into which the wooden ambo is set. A plinth of yellowish azulejos. A small baptismal chapel is situated to the left of the entrance.

4. *St Marien*, Neu-Anspach, Germany, 1998

ARCHITECT HAHN HELTEN ARCHITEKTEN
Location Hans-Böckler-Str. 1-3 (A5 exit 16 Friedberg, B456)
Contact R.F. Paul Lawatsch; +49 6081 963 774; www.kath-usingerland.de
Bibliography *Wöhler, 84–87; www.hahn-helten.de*

SYNAESTH. SPACE Functional rectangular box in concrete bricks and four metal pillars supporting the wooden ceiling. Light falls in from above.

KERYGM. SPACE Total functional minimalism. Outside, a metallic cross on a high pole at the entrance identifies this building complex as Christian. The austere sanctuary displays a slender metallic cross with a wooden Corpus Christi (2004) from the artist Dieter Oehm, a T-form ambo and an altar-table in the form of a table. The chapel of the Blessed Sacrament with colorful work from Dieter Oehm (8 × 3 m, 1999) breaks the overall rigid geometry. Next of the organ is another colorful fresco of Dieter Oehm (420 × 120 cm, 2004).

EUCH. SPACE Pews in light wood gather in three quarters *open ring* around the altar-table-island on one step. Four rows of simple light bulbs hang from the ceiling. Flexibility of use: the parish hall can be combined with the foyer and the worship space.

5. *St Josef der Arbeiter*, Wolfratshausen-Waldram, Germany, 1998

ARCHITECT CLAUS + FORSTER
Location Steinstr. 22 (A95 München-Garmisch-Partenkirchen, exit 6)
Contact R.F. Elmar Heß, +49 8171 29080, www.st-josef-waldram.de
Bibliography *Wöhler, 40–41;* www.claus-und-forster.de

Synaesth. space — wood, bricks, warm colors, light roof structure carried by eight slender columns separated from the walls; the transition between profane and sacred through a garden and a well-lit narthex.

Kerygm. space — tent: pilgrim Church; square walls, octagonal roof structure, circular floor tiles around an empty center between altar-table and assembly; historical polychrome statues of St Joseph and the Virgin; iconographic minimalism; ambo and square altar-table in steel and stone.

Euch. space — communal *domus ecclesiae*: parabolic curved pews around altar-table island.

6. *St Thomas von Aquin*, Berlin-Mitte, Germany, 1999

Architect — Thomas Höger, Sarah Hare

Location — Chausseestr. 128 (U6 Naturkundemuseum/Oranienburger Tor)

Contact — R.F. Christoph Jan Karlson, +49 3028 30950, www.katholische-akademie-berlin.de

Bibliography — *Wöhler, 50–53; CCA 116–121; Kunstführer Schnell & Steiner 2489*

Synaesth. space — *Exterior*: autonomous sculptural box between hotel and academy, and protected by a surrounding portico, which mediates between the sacred and the profane, and allows contact between the three buildings. One enters the space through three high doors in the rear wall, or one at the side. *Interior*: floor, altar-table, and walls are made of granite. Rough bricks (60 × 4.5 cm) in the walls are made of granite from Santiago de Compostela, including randomly some glass slabs, more frequently towards the top. The *altar-table* is also made of one granite tablet on four piles of slabs, leaving out an empty cross-form. The *ambo* is a slender black metallic structure, which repeats the horizontal lines of the walls. Its airiness contrasts playfully and complementary with the solidity of the altar-table. Although horizontal lines predominate, they only reinforce the verticality of the light from above, the four columns in the corners, and the white candles as the strongest pointers to transcendence.

Kerygm. space — There are no exterior insignia that indicate the sacred use of the building. The inner space is characterized by iconographic minimalism, symmetry, and strict geometry. The centrality of the tabernacle gives the space direction and focus. The cube *tabernacle* (from the artist Norbert Radermacher) sits axially in the wall above the altar-table, flanked by six candles. Its gold

leaf front continues the horizontal lines of the wall. A white canopy hiding the ceiling leaves the granite walls respectfully untouched, allowing light to fall in from above and hiding its source. During the night, light protrudes through the glass slabs into the city. An ivory processional Greek cross stands next to the altar-table. In the back stands one polychrome statue of the Virgin (1540).

EUCH. SPACE — Longitudinal *domus Dei* towards the sanctuary. Rows of black multiplex pews with kneelers, of which the edges are left unstained. No physical distinction between sanctuary and nave: the canopy encloses everyone. The church has the explicit function of contemplative space outside of liturgical gatherings, emphasized in the centrality of the tabernacle and the atmosphere of transcendence, expressing simplicity, solidity, and interiority, due to indirect light falling from above, noble materials (granite), and iconographic minimalism.

7. ***St Maximilian Kolbe,*** **Bad Lippspringe, Germany, 1999**

ARCHITECT	KRESINGS ARCHITEKTEN
Location	Maximilian-Kolbe-Str. 2 (A33 exit 26 Paderborn-Elsen)
Contact	R.F. Georg Kersting, +49 5252 5803, www.martinsgemeinde-bl.de
Bibliography	*Wöhler 94–95; www.kresings.com*

SYNAESTH. SPACE — *Exterior:* one has to pass through a square white concrete bell tower in order to reach the courtyard. The church is clad in rough stone, which contrasts with the white entrance box. *Interior:* the rectangular worship space in rough stone walls ends in a slightly curved white wall embracing the central altar-table indirectly lit from above. Altar-table, ambo, tabernacle, and floor are in light gray Italian sandstone. The sanctuary space on two steps is framed in windows through which the rough walls continue.

KERYGM. SPACE — Iconographic minimalism. Pure white light falling down from a hidden source and contrasting with the rough stone walls has to evoke transcendence.

EUCH. SPACE — Transversal *domus Dei* oriented towards the central altar-table in the heavenly-lit sanctuary. The simple dark pews contrast with the other materials.

Architecture of transcendence, with a dimension of immanence in the curved pews around the altar-table, the transversal configuration, and the small dimensions.

Main feature to express transcendence: pure whiteness of bare sanctuary wall that contrasts with the rough texture of the other stone walls; light falling from above behind the altar-table.

8. *Jesus Christus, der gute Hirte,* Frankfurt-Nieder-Erlenbach, Germany, 2000 (Fig. 2.7)

ARCHITECT GÜNTER PFEIFER
Location Im Sauern (A661 Bad Homburg, B3 Bad Vilbel)
Contact R.F. Johannes Xuan Minh Dinh; +49 6101 989 683; www.st-jakobus-harheim.de
Bibliography *AF 116–117; KG 82–83; www.guenterpfeifer.de*

SYNAESTH. SPACE The small building complex of exposed concrete and wood comprises the church, a parish hall, and administrative spaces. The entrance to the church lays inside this complex. The transversally arranged worship space opens up towards the rear wall, letting light fall in from above. A metallic net hangs on the ceiling. Warm colors.

KERYGM. SPACE On the window between narthex and worship space, a Bible text reads: "Amen, Ich sage euch: Ich bin die Tür zu den Schafen. Ich bin die Tür. Wer durch mich geht, wird gerettet werden. Ich bin der gute Hirt. Ich kenne die meinen und die meinen kenne mich, wie mich der Vater kennt und Ich den Vater kenne. Ich gebe mein Leben für die Schafe." (Jn 10, 1–15) A huge cross is cut out in the niche behind the altar-table. Relics are visible in the altar-table. A side chapel is painted blue and displays a polychrome statue of the Virgin. A metallic net separates this chapel from the baptismal chapel.

EUCH. SPACE The wooden pews are arranged in three quarters *open ring* around the altar-table-island on one step. The solid concrete altar-table stands in the center, the ambo stands behind. The wooden presider's chair stands on the central axis between altar-table and cross. One side chapel contains the baptismal font, the other one the tabernacle.

9. *Herz Jesu,* München-Neuhausen, Germany, 2000 (Fig. 1.3)

ARCHITECT ALLMANN, SCATTLER, WAPPNER
Location Lachnerstr. 8 (U1/U7 Gern)
Contact R.F. Carl-Friedrich Burkert; +49 8913 06750; www.herzjezu-muenchen.de
Bibliography *CTG 180–183; KG 86–89; Wöhler, 32–33*

SYNAESTH. SPACE Rectangular wooden box within a glass box. The light wood of louvers and pews create a welcoming, airy atmosphere of transparency and clarity.

KERYGM. SPACE Body of Christ metaphor. Open door hospitality. Conference hall. The façade consists of two giant sliding doors (14 m) in blue glass with texts from the Gospel of St John in original nail-code from Alexander Beleschenko. When opened, they however reveal the closed wall of the organ tribune. A polychrome statue of the Virgin in the darker space under the tribune welcomes the visitors. The ambulatory between wooden and glass boxes displays the Stations of the Cross from Matthias Wähner. In the rear wall, a cross can be distinguished, darkening or lighting up, depending on the natural and artificial light. The floor plan translates the Body of Christ: five glass tiles in the floor reveal the wounds, from artists M + M.

EUCH. SPACE Two rows of wooden pews form this longitudinal *way*-church oriented towards the central altar-table in traditional separation between nave and sanctuary.

10. *Christus Hoffnung der Welt,* Wien-Donaucity, Austria, 2000 (Fig. 5.1)

ARCHITECT HEINZ TESAR
Location *Donaucitystr. 2 (U1 Kaisermühlen)*
Contact R.F. Albert Gabriel; +431 263 0952; www.donaucitykirche.at
Bibliography *AF 240–241; CCA 138–143; CTG 98–101; EK 93; KG 90–93; SB 156–157; Richardson 15, 62–63, 98–101; Kunst und Kirche 3 (2003): 157f; Walter Zschokke, Katholische Kirche "Christus, Hoffnung der Welt" Wien-Donaucity, Kunstführer 2492 (Regensburg: Schnell + Steiner, 2007).*

SYNAESTH. SPACE *Exterior.* The dark, compact, sunken, and rotated cube peppered with holes does not compete with the soaring verticality of its neighbors. The darkness gives a heavy, hermetic impression, which translates into a protective shelter inside, which is surprisingly bright and hospitable. The cross-shaped roof functions as fifth façade when viewed from the tall neighboring buildings. A white Greek cross displays clearly the Christian function on the busy way between subway-station and high-rise district. *Interior.* The exterior skin of oscillating chromium steel cladding contrasts with the warm and light birch paneling and the Canadian maple floor inside. Light peers in through

regularly placed circular apertures of two sizes, which might be a reference to Ronchamp's well-acclaimed wall. As an urbanistic statement of resistance, Tesar has created a golden embrace as counter-gesture to the hard neutrality of the heavily trafficked tarmac void. The expressive effect of multiple apertures is Tesar's trademark that he already explored in his *Evangelische Kirche* in Klosterneuburg (1995). However, he gains in synaesthetic sensuousness through the birch paneling, which contributes in creating a *heterotopia*.

KERYGM. SPACE Compact box with iconographic minimalism, allowing non-believers to feel at home. Swiss cheese holes. The church is a sunken cube (parish rooms are in the basement), of which the corners are cut, one fourth in the East above the tabernacle, one half in the North above the baptismal font, three fourths in the West above the statue of the Virgin (a copy of the Madonna of Gnadendorf) and the children's corner, and totally in the South near the entrance and the water basin. These corner cuts are glazed, allowing light to enter, emphasizing the meaningful corners, and relieving the space of a boxy feel. As such, the square plan is cut into a cross with eight corners – a kerygmatic reference to the eighth day of the Resurrection. Hence, Tesar masterfully imbues strict geometrical forms (square, circle) with playful, musical rhythm such as in his church in Klosterneuburg (1995). Also the skylight is a welcome good-humored gesture breaking open the strict geometry in which the Church can settle herself at times. The interior displays clearly what it stands for: a parish church, making visible the essential sacraments in the center and in the corners. The altar-table is placed in the center, the ambo retreats. A gilded cross is painted in a circle on the wall behind the altar-table. The small circular aperture at the cross's center, similar to the skylight above the altar-table, is a metaphor for the wound in Jesus's side. The Stations of the Cross from Heinz Tesar were mutilated through graffiti in English. The parish community has opted to leave this expression of anger as an appropriate mark of the meaning of the Passion. Altar-table, ambo, font, and basin are made out of stone by the architect's son Marc. A circular hole in the rectangular altar-table refers to the circular holes in the walls. The circular holes create a distinct feeling of otherness in this *heterotopia*, which is refreshing for Christians and non-Christians all the

like. For Laura Moffatt, Tesar's Postmodern vocabulary of humor and levity creates "a semblance of the potential for human development and achievement not without God but as part of God's creation. Refreshingly, Tesar avoids the commonplace architectural misinterpretation of spiritual values into organic symbolism. From its exterior Christ Church is uncompromisingly urban without aping its commercial neighbors […]. Theologically, this is an important contribution to a more relevant church architecture – places of worship and contemplation that celebrate the developed worlds without pandering to other gods." (CCA 138–140) One is reminded of Tillich's "victory of human and divine spirit."

EUCH. SPACE Liturgically clearly a communal church, expressing the gathered *Body of Christ.* The baptismal font is strangely placed at the opposite side of the entrance, whereas the tabernacle is not directly visible, unless one turns around. The curved pews express the communitarian gathering around the altar-table island. There is a lot of generous empty breathing space. Even outside liturgical gatherings, the place offers contemplative rest.

11. *Kirchenzentrum,* Hannover-Kronsberg, Germany, 2000

ARCHITECT BERNHARD HIRCHE
Location Sticksfeld 6–12
Contact Pf. Mirjam Schmale; +49 511 950 7085; johannis.trilos.de
Bibliography *Wöhler, 90–91; KG 84–85*

SYNAESTH. SPACE Rectangular box in concrete and glass incrusted in a contemporary interpretation of a cloister integrating housing blocks. Light falls in from above the altar-table. Three walls are entirely made of glass and a grating lattice, through which the light is filtered. Behind the altar-table is work of sandblasted blue glass, from the artist Jochem Poensgen.

KERYGM. SPACE Conference hall with emphasis on the sanctuary.

EUCH. SPACE *Way*-form in two blocks of chairs oriented towards a central altar-table, above which hangs a metallic cross. The L-shaped altar-table ingeniously includes the baptismal font, joining the two sacraments of Baptism and Supper.

12. *Kirche zu Wartenberg,* Berlin-Hohenschönhausen, Germany, 2000

ARCHITECT MEP MEYER, ERNST, UND PARTNER (100P)

Location	Falkenberger Chaussee 93 (S75 Hohenschönhausen)
Contact	Pf. Franziska Riebesel, +49 9925 7266, www.kirche-berlin-wartenberg.de
Bibliography	*Wöhler, 58–59*

SYNAESTH. SPACE *Exterior:* bricks. *Interior*: white curved walls, terracotta floor tiles. The roof is lifted from the walls, leaving a horizontal strip of light.

KERYGM. SPACE ship

EUCH. SPACE half elliptical plan, with table, font, and lectern (from the artist Anna Franziska Schwarzbach) at one end, which is flanked by vertical colored windows. Longitudinal configuration of chairs.

13. *Evangelische Autobahnkirche*, Medenbach, Germany, 2001

ARCHITECT	HANS WAECHTER
Location	*Raststätte Wiesbaden-Medenbach* (*A3 Köln-Frankfurt*)
Contact	Evangelische Kirchengemeinde Medenbach; www.autobahn-kirche-medenbach.de
Bibliography	*Wöhler, 82–83*

SYNAESTH. SPACE One passes through exposed-concrete arcades into a rectangular garden of trees, before entering the open atrium space with nine fountains, which drown out the noise of the freeway. A vertical window allows to see the flickering candle inside. Finally, one enters the chapel proper in red brick, on a square plan with an impressive 45°-pitched roof in glass. The warm exposed brick walls create an atmosphere of tranquility. The generous glass ceiling lifts the mind up towards the heavens.

KERYGM. SPACE Iconographic minimalism. A huge timber cross stands alongside the lower ivy-clad concrete wall, identifying this building as a Christian place of rest. In the exact center of the square stands the Easter light. On the brick wall behind the altar-table, a Greek cross is formed by horizontal stone layers.

EUCH. SPACE Twenty wooden chairs are geometrically placed in two parallel rows facing the altar-table.

14. *Herz Jesu*, Völklingen-Ludweiler, Germany, 2001 (Fig. 4.6)

ARCHITECT	LAMOTT ARCHITEKTEN
Location	Spessartstr. 2 (A 620 exit 8-Völklingen-Geislautern)

Contact www.pg-warndt.de

Bibliography *AF 148–149; CTG 120–121; www.lamott.de; Sonja Schmuker ed., Gedanken zur Architektur für einen besonderen Ort (Völklingen-Ludweiler: Pfarrkirche und Gemeindezentrum Herz Jezu, 2000).*

SYNAESTH. SPACE Concrete, steel, and glass provide a hard, utilitarian, and somber atmosphere. One penetrates this rectangular box passing over a wooden footbridge through an exposed concrete wall. The entire wall behind the altar-table is in glass, but the view is brutally cut off by a steel wall, which causes irritating reflections of the exposed light bulbs. The prominent use of the rusted Corten steel is a reference to this industrial town near Saarbrücken.

KERYGM. SPACE Minimalism. A gilded cross stands behind the glass wall, in an insipid imitation of Ando's masterly *Church on the Water.* Altar-table, ambo, presider's chair, and base for the tabernacle are cast in concrete. A polychrome statue from the former church is well kept and venerated near the entrance.

EUCH. SPACE The wooden pews of the former church were arranged in a three quarter *open ring*-configuration around the concrete altar-table, which is directly placed on the concrete floor.

15. *St Peter Canisius*, Berlin-Charlottenburg, Germany, 2002 (Figs. 2.5, 4.4)

ARCHITECT HEIKE BÜTTNER, CLAUS NEUMANN, GEORGE BRAUN

Location Witzlebenstr. 30 (U2 Sophie-Charlotte-Platz)

Contact R.F. Joachim Gimbler SJ; +49 30 326 7130; www.st.canisius-berlin.de

Bibliography *Wöhler, 54–55; KG 102–105*

SYNAESTH. SPACE *Exterior.* Two exposed concrete cubes, one closed and one open, are connected by a wooden form, which houses the entrance and the Marian chapel. On special days, the 11 m high entrance doors welcome the visitors. Most prominent is the empty outdoor space next to the worship space. This is breathing space without any clear function, visually related to the worship space through a large window (15×6 m^2). *Interior.* Inside, the walls are painted white. The small Marian chapel is entirely clad in wood, providing a dark intimate atmosphere inside. A lower space to the North holds the tabernacle remarkably in the middle of the space, under a large cylindrical skylight. A curved wooden bench following the curved wall invites to sit and contemplate.

KERYGM. SPACE Iconographic minimalism. *Outside.* No Christian sign identifies this building as being a church, except perhaps the high rectangular bell tower. More in detail, the concrete façade displays small crosses, in which some parts are filled with metallic strips (from the artist Joan Waltemath). *Inside.* On the North wall, a darkened *Corpus Christi* (from Gerhard Schreiter) was saved from the fire of the burned church in 1995. Since the fire, Christ holds his arms inclined towards his people. A square *Golden Field* (from Winfried Muthesius) is placed behind the altar-table, bringing to mind the gold of icons. Relationship with the empty outdoor space is made through the fracture in the yellow sandstone altar-table (from the artist Guy Charlier), which corresponds to a piece of stone outside. He also made the tabernacle and the stone supports for baptismal font and Bible. The metallic font and ambo are made by Jo Achermann. A wooden statue of the welcoming Virgin of Mondsichel (Otto Moroder, 1943) is well venerated in the enclosed Marian chapel. Next to the tabernacle hangs a 16th-century painting of the Resurrection of Christ.

EUCH. SPACE The chairs are placed longitudinally in *way*-form towards the central altar-table placed directly on the stone floor, which gently raises 10 cm. The church is East oriented. The sanctuary is remarkably generous in empty space. The baptismal font stands before the southern glass wall, behind which water flows from the wall.

16. *St Theodor,* Köln-Vingst, Germany, 2002 (Figs. 1.7–1.8)

ARCHITECT PAUL BÖHM
Location Burgstr 42 (U9 Vingst)
Contact R.F. Dirk Bingener; +49 221 872 176; www.katholische-kirche-koeln.de; katholisch.hoevi.info
Bibliography *Wöhler, 108–111*

SYNAESTH. SPACE *Exterior and interior:* exposed concrete (0.50 m thick walls). The church is a cylinder (22.5 × 10.75 m) integrating an existing rectangular bell tower from the former 1905-church, dyed dark gray, and a rectangular parish block. An outdoor staircase climbs up around the cylinder towards the tower. Inside, these steps form an ingenious upper spiral towards the sanctuary, also providing a different character to the three side chapels underneath. Natural and artificial light is allowed to fall in

through glazed slits between the stairway and the walls, and between the ceiling and the walls. The tower is also dyed gray inside, holding the tabernacle. In spite of the hard materials, the space displays a certain warmth due to the play of light.

KERYGM. SPACE

Minimalism and austerity. The cylindrical form expresses shelter. The plan is an omega. On the outside, only a 120 cm cross in rusty steel reminds of the Christian character of this volumetric composition. It stood since 1955 on the tower, but is now placed near the entrance where the stairway begins. The stairway climbs up towards the light, outside as well as inside, becoming a metaphor for the church. On the outside, each time on a small platform between four steps, fourteen concrete steles from artist Matthias Heiermann display the stations of the cross (1947) from Ferdinand Heseding (+1961) of the former church. The stairway ends in a small Chapel of the Resurrection on top of the tower. Because of the tower holding the Blessed Sacrament on floor level, it becomes an identifiable Sacrament Tower in the city. The surrounding wall lowers gradually, emphasizing the effect from confined darkness to expansive light. The side chapels contain respectively a polychrome statue of Saint Joseph, a reliquary of Saint Theodore, and the baptismal font (1905). In this last chapel, a vertical slit in the wall brings in light from outside. This slit is underlined by the same pedestal as the statue and the reliquary in the other chapels. Light is the symbol of the Resurrection. A rough cross (3.50 × 2.50 m) from a 300 year-old oak is attached against the supporting wall under the staircase and is inclined towards the assembly. The three side chapels are a contemporary interpretation of the side chapels in Gothic and Baroque times. On the huge windows where tower and cylinder connect, Bible texts chosen by the community are written to be read from the outside. A 17th-century polychrome statue of the Virgin stands on a concrete pedestal at the back of the congregation, there where the worship space opens up to become gathering space. A Bible with illustrations from Marc Chagall lies open: it is a gift from the Protestant community.

EUCH. SPACE

In four radial blocks of light pews in birchwood, combining seats for one and two persons, the assembly gathers in *open ring* around the altar-table. The choir closes the ring in three

rows of pews behind the altar-table-island (4.20 m) on two steps. Ambo and altar-table (1 × 0.80 m), both in solid concrete, stand next to each other on the red sandstone *mensa* (2.90 × 1.10 m) of the former church. On top of both ambo and altar-table, cast in the same concrete as the whole building, pieces of the former *mensa* is cut out. Hence, the Eucharist is still celebrated on the former altar-table, with the same relics of Saints Pia and Victorian. In his enthusiasm for this ingenious move, the architect has even topped the concrete presider's chair with the former *mensa*. The sanctuary is indirectly lit from behind the tower. Even the entire roof can be used as worship space under the sky.

17. *St Katharina von Siena*, Köln-Blumenberg, Germany, 2003

ARCHITECT	NIKOLAUS BIENEFELD
Location	Schneebergstr 63 (S11 Köln-Chorweiler Nord A57 exit 27 Chorweiler)
Contact	R.F. Stephan Weißkopf; +49 221 355 2690, st.pankratius.info
Bibliography	*Wöhler, 106–107; www.nikolaus-bienefeld.de; Kunst und Kirche 59 (1996): 54 f.*

SYNAESTH. SPACE	Two thick walls of roughly hewn and naturally colored concrete (1 m) make up the narrow nave of this church. This material contrasts with the brick of the other buildings of the new-built parish center. The horizontal stripes of the walls define the space. One enters the worship space from the side, walking down ten steps. The central part is lit from above through a square lantern. Behind the altar-table is a small apse, indicating the liturgical focus. There is a lot of cold empty space, as if the space were too big for the congregation.
KERYGM. SPACE	Tent.
EUCH. SPACE	*Open ring* formed by five rows of wooden pews around the central altar-table-island one step high.

18. *Heilig-Kreuz*, Grebenau, Germany, 2003

ARCHITECT	MARKUS KOLLMANN
Location	Bornwiesenweg 6 (A5 exit 2-Alsfeld-Ost, B62)
Contact	www.bistummainz.de
Bibliography	*Wöhler, 76–77; www.sibo-beton.de; www.germanarchitects.com/de/kollmannarchitekten; www.architec24.de*

SYNAESTH. SPACE An older 1954 church was integrated in a contemporary entity of new entrance, timber roof, and sanctuary. Stairs lead towards the entrance block as a distinguished composition of concrete, wood, and glass. The church interior is entirely painted white. The sanctuary is bathed in light. The old windows in the nave were walled up. A glass strip between walls and roof lights up the timber ceiling in the nave, creating a tranquil atmosphere of indirect light. The new church contrasts with the former in being lighter and emptier, leaving aside a lot of the former coziness. The baptismal font stands between the new entrance and the old nave, and announces in its solid materials the altar-table and the ambo.

KERYGM. SPACE Outside, a concrete Greek cross is clearly distinguishable in the façade. The old statues contrast with the white space. The sanctuary is entirely new. Presider's chair at the side, altar-table, and ambo on three steps paint with their solidity the sanctuary in geometric, modernist lines, lit up in white light from above.

EUCH. SPACE The liturgical configuration of the former church has been left untouched. Longitudinal *way*-configuration of wooden pews towards the sanctuary separated from the nave.

19. *St Maria Magdalena*, Freiburg-Rieselfeld, Germany, 2004

ARCHITECT KISTER, SCHEITHAUER, GROSS

Location Maria-von-Rudloff-Platz 1 (S5 or B31a exit Rieselfeld)

Contact RC: R.F. Konrad Irslinger, +49 761 1374 310; Ev: Dk. Simone Seufert, +49 761 459 690; www.kirche-im-rieselfeld.de

Bibliography *BRL 44–47; Wöhler, 12–13; Anton Bauhofer, "Ökumenisches Kirchenzentrum Freiburg-Rieselfeld," Das Münster 57 (2004): 244; Susanne Gross, "Zwei Kirchen – eine Kirche," Das Münster 57 (2004): 245–247; Ursula Kleefisch-Jobst, "Verschiebbare Wände für zwei Konfessionen: Doppelkirche Rieselfeld, Freiburg," Bauweit 3 (Jan 2004): 24–29; Arno Lederer, "Doppelkirche für zwei Konfessionen, Freiburg," DAM Jahrbuch Architektur in Deutschland 2003 (München: 2003), 58–65; Wettbewerbe aktuell 3 (2000): 6–67.*

SYNAESTH. SPACE *Exterior and interior:* exposed concrete that contrasts with its environment. In 2005, a metal cross of glory with golden interior was added near the entrance, designed by Susanne Gross.

KERYGM. SPACE Iconoclasm. The baptismal font is situated in the foyer between the Catholic and Evangelical worship spaces. One has to

descend three steps down, remembering to die with Christ in order to rise with Him. The wooden altar-tables in both Catholic and Evangelical spaces stand upon 40 legs, reminding of the 40 days in the desert and the entire world in its multiplicity.

EUCH. SPACE *Domus ecclesiae.* The two worship spaces, Catholic and Evangelical, can be united into one by folding away the walls. All the furniture is movable. All configurations are half circles around a central altar-table.

20. *Auferstehungskirche*, Wolnzach, Germany, 2008

ARCHITECT CLAUS + FORSTER
Location Klosterstr. 8 (A39 München-Regensburg, exit 54)
Contact Evangelisch-Lutherische Kirchengemeinde Pfaffenhofen, Pf. Michael Baldeweg, +49 8442 60467, www.elkg-paf.de
Bibliography *www.claus-und-forster.de*

SYNAESTH. SPACE *Exterior*: small terracotta dyed cube sticking out of the one-level *Gemeindezentrum*, white bell tower. The transition between profane and sacred through a patio, separated from the street by a series of concrete *stelae* between worship space and tower. *Interior*: two orange dyed walls, roof and other walls white; movable table and lectern in wood are simply placed on the stone floor; the organ is placed on the gallery to the left. Fascinating choreography of indirect light, color, and cross in order to sing of the transcendence of light. Light falls in from above. The architects speak of a "Baroque-like choreography" (*die beinahe barock anmutende Licht-Regie*) in relation to the nearby Roman Catholic church in Baroque style [www.claus-und-forster.de, accessed April 15, 2013]. The cut-out Greek cross not only sheds light on the exterior, but is repeated as well in the hanging white interior altar-table-wall.

KERYGM. SPACE One Bible text is simply written in white on the right orange wall, starting where the white hanging altar-table-wall begins: "…und er wird abwischen alle Tränen von ihren Augen, und der Tod wird nicht mehr sein…" (Ap 21:4) Iconographic minimalism.

EUCH. SPACE Communal *domus Dei* of transcendent Word and Light. Longitudinal configuration: five rows of chairs are axially placed towards the table, which is essentially the support for the divine Word. The room can be enlarged by folding away the wooden back wall.

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