

TOWARD INTERCULTURAL ARCHITECTURAL PRACTICES ABLE TO MAP CULTURAL DIVERSITY¹
MAKING USE OF WITTGENSTEIN'S TOOLS TO ENHANCE INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE

HACIA PRÁCTICAS ARQUITECTÓNICAS INTERCULTURALES
CAPACES DE CARTOGRAFIAR LA DIVERSIDAD CULTURAL
HERRAMIENTAS WITTGENSTEINIANAS PARA FAVORECER EL DIÁLOGO INTERCULTURAL

CARLA CARMONA
University of Seville
ccarmona@us.es

Abstract: This paper understands interculturality as an exchange of views on the basis of mutual respect and transformative understanding. Its purpose is to show that Wittgenstein's conceptual tools, in particular his concept of "synoptic view", as well as his remarks on architecture, can be helpful in order to foster intercultural architectural practices and contribute to making visible the cultural diversity of our societies with a view to promoting intercultural dialogue. I share the view, proposed by Material Engagement Theory, that materiality shapes how we think and how we live.

This paper addresses architecture's potential to put us on the path toward achieving intercultural dialogue. In particular, it deals with how architecture can contribute to the creation of intercultural spaces, one of the five policy approaches to the promotion of intercultural dialogue spelled out in the *White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue* (2008). It suggests that, in addition to *using* spaces in intercultural ways, these should be *designed* interculturally. Besides, it explores the possibilities of architecture for the cultivation of critical thinking and shared values. I argue that our architectural practices can provide us with materialized overviews of cultural diversity and thus enlighten us, promoting analytical thinking, mutual understanding and awareness of one's own cultural identity. By examining Wittgenstein's idea that architecture is a gesture, I also advance that architecture conveys a *Weltanschauung*.

The case is made in four steps. First, I define what I mean by intercultural architectural practices. Second, I shed light on the cultural diversity that is characteristic of contemporary societies by making use of Wittgenstein's concept of "form of life" and by revising it. Third, I examine Wittgenstein's concept of *Übersichtlichkeit* with a view to exploring architecture's capacity to offer synoptic views of how different cultural identities overlap in contemporary societies. Next, I pursue Wittgenstein's insight that architecture expresses the spirit of a civilization and connect it with architecture's pedagogical dimension.

Keywords: affordance, architecture, dialogue, form of life, interculturality, synoptic view, Wittgenstein, world-view.

Resumen: Este artículo entiende la interculturalidad como un intercambio de perspectivas que parte del respeto mutuo y de una comprensión del otro cultural autotransformadora. Su objetivo es mostrar que las herramientas conceptuales de Wittgenstein, en particular su concepto de "visión sinóptica", así como sus observaciones sobre arquitectura, pueden ser útiles para lograr prácticas arquitectónicas interculturales y contribuir a tornar visible la diversidad cultural de nuestras sociedades con el objetivo de favorecer el diálogo intercultural.

¹ This paper is part of research conducted in 2018 at the Department of Cultural Anthropology of the University of Tokyo while enjoying a research stay financed by VI PPIT-US (University of Seville).

Comparto la idea, propuesta por la así llamada Material Engagement Theory, de que la materialidad configura cómo pensamos y cómo vivimos.

Este artículo enfoca el potencial que tiene la arquitectura para ponernos en el camino hacia el logro del diálogo intercultural. En particular, se ocupa de cómo la arquitectura puede contribuir a la creación de espacios interculturales, una de las cinco maneras de enfocar la promoción del diálogo intercultural explicitadas en el *Libro Blanco sobre el Diálogo Intercultural* (2008). Propone que en lugar de limitarnos a *usar* los espacios interculturalmente, estos deberían ser *diseñados* interculturalmente. Además, explora las posibilidades de la arquitectura para cultivar el pensamiento crítico y valores compartidos. Argumento que nuestras prácticas arquitectónicas pueden ofrecernos panorámicas materializadas de nuestra diversidad cultural y de esta forma iluminarnos, favoreciendo el pensamiento analítico, la comprensión mutua y una mayor conciencia acerca de nuestra propia identidad cultural. Mediante el examen de la idea de Wittgenstein de que la arquitectura es un gesto, también defiendo la idea de que la arquitectura expresa una *Weltanschauung*.

Se distinguen cuatro partes. Primero, se define qué quiero decir por prácticas arquitectónicas interculturales. En segundo lugar, se arroja luz sobre la diversidad cultural que es característica de las sociedades contemporáneas haciendo uso del concepto “forma de vida” de Wittgenstein, revisándolo. En tercer lugar, examino el concepto de *Übersichtlichkeit* de Wittgenstein con la intención de explorar la capacidad de la arquitectura para ofrecer visiones sinópticas de cómo diferentes identidades culturales se superponen en las sociedades contemporáneas. Finalmente, discuto la idea de Wittgenstein de que la arquitectura expresa el espíritu de una civilización y lo conecto con la dimensión pedagógica de la disciplina.

Palabras clave: affordance, arquitectura, diálogo, forma de vida, interculturalidad, visión sinóptica, Wittgenstein, cosmovisión.

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The aim of this paper is neither to offer a comprehensive account of Wittgenstein's remarks on architecture nor to examine the parallels that he established between philosophy and architecture. Instead, its purpose is to show that Wittgenstein's conceptual tools, in particular his concept of "synoptic view", as well as his remarks on architecture, can be helpful to foster intercultural architectural practices and contribute to making visible the cultural diversity of our societies with a view to promoting intercultural dialogue.

I do not mean to claim that the quest for interculturality is behind Wittgenstein's remarks on architecture, or for that matter behind his main philosophical concerns. Rather, I propose that Wittgenstein's insights into architecture, his conceptual framework and his general understanding of philosophy can be highly useful to tackle the difficulties that arise in the context of intercultural dialogue, in intercultural architectural practice in particular.

The Council of Europe and UNESCO have drawn attention to the need to acquire and promote cross-cultural dialogical skills with a view to achieving a society where mutual understanding is the starting point for building together and the end point of hate speech and other racist and discriminatory conflicts that have their origin in incomprehension (Mansouri, 2017). It is clear that we still have a long way to go in that direction and that the urgency to reach our goal is growing given that the degree of diversity in our societies is unprecedented and ever-growing.

The *White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue* (WPoID)² adopted in 2008 identifies the creation of spaces for intercultural dialogue as one of the five keys to achieving a democratic and tolerant Europe, based on the ideas of community, communication and interdependence. Let me quote from WPoID:

Developing a political culture supportive of cultural pluralism is a demanding task. It entails an education system which generates capacities for critical thinking and innovation, and spaces in which people are allowed to participate and to express themselves. (WPoID 25)

Architecture has a big role to play in that task, both regarding the design of such spaces and the cultivation of critical, analytical thinking and shared values. I hold the view, proposed by Lambros Malafouris's Material Engagement Theory, that "brains, bodies and things conflate, mutually constituting each other" (Malafouris, 2018: 756). "Things" includes architecture. Our engagement with architecture shares such metaplasticity. How we see the world and how we think about it are constituted by the material world. In other words, materiality is entangled with our thinking and ultimately with our everyday life. It shapes how we live and how we think. This extends to our social ways of being. The focus on material engagement is after the realization of "the profound way materiality envelops our everyday lives and mediates our social ways of being with one another" (Malafouris, 2014: 140-141). As it has already been suggested regarding architecture, "by changing the material, we can change our socio-cultural practices" (Rietveld et al, 2019: 300).

Architecture provides us with a variety of affordances³ to promote interculturality. Social cohesion is one of the aims behind interculturality. It has been shown brilliantly how architecture can contribute to enhancing social cohesion, how architecture has both a direct and a long-term impact on socio-cultural practices (Rietveld et al, 2019). Spaces can be designed in such a way that their qualities contribute to strengthening our abilities to express ourselves freely, our capacity to listen to the views of others or the cohesion of culturally diverse social groups. Their design can also contribute to making visible different forms of life within a society.

The question that interests us here is what we can learn from Wittgenstein's philosophy to design architecture in such a way that it provides us with the possibilities of engagement, that is, with the *architectural* affordances that we need in order to promote and *gain more insight* into interculturality.

² Council of Europe (2008), *White Paper on Intercultural dialogue*, Strasbourg, https://www.coe.int/t/dg4/intercultural/Source/Pub_White_Paper/White%20Paper_final_revised_EN.pdf [accessed February 10 2019]

³ I use the term "affordance" as it is generally accepted in the current debate: the possibilities for action provided by the environment (Gibson, 1979; Rietveld et al, 2019).

1. Intercultural Architectural Practices⁴

Before addressing the question, let me explain in certain detail what I mean by intercultural architectural practices. I understand as “intercultural architectural practices” those practices of architecture that work toward the understanding and the promotion of interculturality. In my view, interculturality has “dialogue” at its core. Intercultural dialogue is not about persuading societies, communities or individuals to be more like the majority, but is instead a process to promote deliberation about disparity and divergence rather than gaining consensus (Hardy & Hussain, 2017: 67). Moreover, and this is missing in WPoID, it is a *transformative* dialogical engagement with the cultural other. Intercultural dialogue can be understood (as it has been approached by certain voices within hermeneutics⁵) as a fusion of horizons, which means that our initial understanding, our horizon, broadens, gets transformed, as a result of dialogue (Taylor, 1994).

Multicultural approaches to the management of cultural diversity as a means to secure inclusive and cohesive societies have been found inadequate, not to mention cultural assimilation. After all, multiculturalism is little more than “the empirical fact that different cultures exist and may interact within a given space and social organisation” (WPoID 11). This interaction might be conflictless, but if we want transformative, cohesive understanding between societies and within societies, we need more than that. If what we want is to work on the nature of that interaction, we need interculturality, which can be portrayed as an open and respectful exchange of views on the basis of mutual respect and transformative *understanding*.

In fact, it has been argued that multiculturalism often shared the same conception of society that assimilationism: an opposition of a majority and a minority (or minorities) in static positions, which led to the stigmatization and segregation of communities and the assumption of cultural stereotypes, precisely because of the emphasis placed on cultural specificity. The idea to reject would be the following: since we are different, since we belong to different cultural groups, it is better to remain isolated in order to avoid conflict. By contrast, the truth is that cultural identities often overlap. The otherness of the cultural other is therefore more familiar to us than what is generally thought. Moreover, WPoID makes clear that intercultural dialogue is also needed on an individual level, since every individual may integrate different cultural affiliations:

Intercultural dialogue is therefore important in managing multiple cultural affiliations in a multicultural environment. It is a mechanism to constantly achieve a new identity balance. (WPoID 18)

Architecture can play a fundamental role in fostering interculturality, both between societies and within a society. The widely extended idea behind the dominant policies is that we can *use* spaces in that direction. But we have already seen that it is not the only strategy that can be developed. In addition to using spaces interculturally, (previously) we could *design* spaces interculturally. Such spaces will provide society with further and more successful possibilities of engagement to encourage interculturality. Imagine spaces with the capacity to map how different cultural identities overlap, or spaces with architectonic qualities that inject pluralism, tolerance and broadmindedness into our societies in a non-mediated way.

Let us look more closely at the kinds of spaces that are explicitly addressed in WPoID:

It is essential to engender spaces for dialogue that are open to all. Successful intercultural governance, at any level, is largely a matter of cultivating such spaces: physical spaces like streets, markets and shops, houses, kindergartens, schools and universities, cultural and social centers, youth clubs, churches, synagogues and mosques, company meeting rooms and work places, museums, libraries and other leisure facilities, or virtual space like the media.

⁴ Certainly, my approach to intercultural architectural practice has some features in common with Kisho Kurokawa’s philosophy of symbiosis and what he has called “the architecture of the age of life”, with its focus on plurality and its desire to overcome “universalism”. However, his conception of intercultural architecture as hybrid architecture, “in which elements of different cultures exist in symbiosis” (Kurokawa, 1994: 25), is not what I am trying to promote here. A comparison between his approach and the one proposed in this paper shall be the topic of another article.

⁵ For instance, think of diatopical hermeneutics, which builds on the concept coined by Raimundo Panikkar (1979) and elaborated by Boaventura de Sousa Santos (2014: 92), as well as of its revised form, multi-topia hermeneutics (Giri, 2017: 37-38). Fidel Tubino has explicitly fostered insight into the concept of “intercultural dialogue” by making use of diatopical hermeneutics (Tubino, 2009).

Town planning is an obvious example: urban space can be organized in a ‘single-minded’ fashion or more ‘open-minded’ ways. The former include the conventional suburb, housing state, industrial zone, car park or ring road. The latter embrace the busy square, the park, the lively street, the pavement café or the market. If single-minded areas favour an atomized existence, open-minded places can bring diverse sections of society together and breed a sense of tolerance. It is critically important that migrant populations do not find themselves, as so often, concentrated on soulless and stigmatized housing estates, excluded and alienated from city life. (WPoID 33)

It mentions the potential of museums and heritage centers to challenge selective narratives, as well as the intercultural possibilities of non-physical spaces, such as cultural activities, in particular those that promote creativity, such as the arts: “the arts are also a playground of contradiction and symbolic confrontation, allowing for individual expression, critical self-reflection and meditations” (ibid.). Likewise, it understands sport or the workplace as further playgrounds in which to play with the limits of our cultural images and extend them.

Strikingly, there is little reference to how physical spaces should be built. We are told that we should go for space which is open-mindedly organized, instead of single-mindedly organized. But what does practicing architecture in such a way mean? How should architecture be designed? The WPoID seems to forget the role played by architectural design in the capacity that those centers might have to enhance cultural diversity and understanding. Backing investment on the creation of buildings that by definition contribute to the exchange of views and social cohesion, such as schools or universities, cultural and social centers, museums or other leisure facilities, is without doubt a good thing regarding intercultural dialogue. Nonetheless, caring about the qualities of those spaces could also help to bring about intercultural dialogue.

We find a reference to “design” concerning urban planning:

Particular attention needs to be given to the design and management of public spaces, like parks, civic squares, airports and train stations. Urban planners are encouraged to create ‘open towns’ with sufficient public space for encounters. Such spaces, ideally constructed with an open mind –planned for a variety of uses, that is– can help to generate a shared civic sense of place and an intercultural commitment. (WPoID 46)

If we want to create “open towns”, we might also want to create “open buildings”, in the sense that they have “sufficient space for encounters”. That *openness* has been a widespread policy in the design of airports and train stations all over the world. Some of our museums, libraries or cultural centers have also been conceived in such a way, making sure that they have sufficient space for encounters. For instance, think of the Aki-ta International University Library. In its main space, a theater-like great hall, reading spaces and bookshelves are displayed in an ever-growing radial manner. Library users, as real wanderers, are free to walk around and pick up the book they want. The space, its design, seems to invite them to learn and get inspired from each other, to interact in respectful ways and to contribute with deep satisfaction to the general atmosphere of exchange and concentration. It is indeed “constructed with an open mind”, so that it can adapt to “a variety of uses” and generate “a shared civic sense of place”. Certainly one of the best examples is the project of the New Amsterdam Park, conceived by RAAAF [Rietveld Architecture-Art-Affordance] in collaboration with Atelier de Lyon: a floating park conformed by 24 barges, interconnected by a myriad of passages and short-cuts, which can also be accessed from the water, since one can also explore the park in small boats. Those spaces, all freely accessible, are supposed to host different subcultures, which will be able to interact and feel familiar to each other. In fact, the main aim of the park is to turn people from different subcultures into trusted strangers. With that idea in mind, the park offers an endless number of spots from which to observe others and be observed by them. One can be viewed and view from a distance, and one can alter the distance as much as one wants, and get close whenever one feels ready and has the curiosity for it. Furthermore, possibilities of interaction change with the season, and this leads to new combinations of social subcultures.

Which architectonic qualities are better for such purposes is likely to vary from one country to another, from one city to another (and in different neighborhoods within the same city), and even from one village to another. In some places one will feel that a certain kind of vastness is needed, while in other places it might take the form of a cozy place of retreat. In some places one will look for light and the presence of nature and in others for thick walls and chiaroscuro. In that sense, its context, the kinds of buildings in the area, regarding both their use and their aesthetic qualities, should not be ignored.

In order to gain more insight into the nature of cultural diversity, in the next section we shall look closely into Wittgenstein's concept of "form of life".

2. Cultural identities and forms of life

The importance of the notion of "form of life" in Wittgenstein's philosophy has been contested. There are current debates regarding its meaning and scope⁶. Peter Hacker has pointed out that despite the fact that the word *Lebensform* occurs in the *Philosophical Investigations* only three times, it is of fundamental importance because "it is an integral part of the revolution in philosophical thought that the *Investigations* was instigating" (Hacker, 2015: 4). It functions as a cornerstone to the general conception that underlies that revolution and it is linked with other essential notions, such as those of "language-game" or "practice". Wittgenstein's insight that speaking a language is part of an activity, in itself a part of a complex web of interconnected and overlapping practices, embedded in a form of life, continues to shed light on the way we live.

That web of interconnected and overlapping practices provides a common ground, something which is not grounded on something more fundamental, a set of certainties, a world-view, an attitude toward life, the world and our fellow human beings. Thus, Wittgenstein's statement that "What has to be accepted, the given, is –one might say– forms of life" (PPF 344-345). He pursued this insight in the remarks collected in *On Certainty* (OC). The following two quotations are particularly revelatory:

Now I would like to regard this certainty, not as something akin to hastiness or superficiality, but as a form of life [Lebensform]. (That is very badly expressed and probably badly thought as well). (OC §358)

But that means I want to conceive it as something that lies beyond being justified or unjustified; as it were, as something animal. (OC §359)

I share the view that there is a plurality of historico-cultural forms of life:

A form of life is a way of living, a pattern of activities, actions, interactions and feelings which are inextricably interwoven with, and partly constituted by, uses of language. It rests upon very general pervasive facts of nature. It includes shared natural and linguistic responses, broad agreement in definitions and judgements, and corresponding behaviour. (Baker & Hacker, 2009: 74)

Danièle Moyal-Sharrock has shown brilliantly how the concept of "form of life" is intertwined with other framework concepts which have often been confused or conflated with it (Moyal-Sharrock, 2015). In those quotations in which the historico-cultural dimension of the concept of "form of life" –as well as of other framework concepts, such as "certainty", "patterns of life", "ways of living" or "facts of living"– is more straightforward, Wittgenstein often seems to be picturing a plurality of "forms of life" which are independent and do not overlap. I think that Stefan Majetschak has argued for replacing "forms of life" by "patterns of life" in order to remedy this fact, with a view to discouraging the ontological isolation usually attributed to the term *Lebensform* (Majetschak, 2010).

Wittgenstein's discussion of the capacity of Westerners to understand Chinese people (LWPP II 89; Z §219) or the ability of human beings in general to understand lions if they were to speak (PPF §327), come to mind. The aim of such passages in the later Wittgenstein is to make us aware of the difficulty of understanding others if one does not share their form of life. Forms of life are pictured as disconnected from each other:

We also say of a person that he is transparent to us. It is, however, important, as regards our considerations that one human being can be a complete enigma to another. One learns this when one comes into a strange country with entirely strange

⁶ See the volume "Wittgenstein and Forms of life" that the *Nordic Wittgenstein Review* dedicated to the concept in 2015, ed. by D. Moyal-Sharrock & P. Donatelli: <http://www.nordicwittgensteinreview.com/issue/view/NWR%20Special%20Issue%202015> [accessed January 10 2019]

traditions; and, what is more, even though one has mastered the country's language. One does not *understand* the people. (And not because of not knowing what they are saying to themselves.) We can't find our feet with them. (PPF §325)

Other examples refer to how “we”⁷ would not find our feet with the people from a tribe with no expression of feeling of any kind (Z §§383-390). In general, Wittgenstein is thinking of the interaction of a foreigner in an unknown country or of an explorer's interaction with a community that is unknown to him (with a language that is also unknown to him) (PI §206). He used his own experience as a foreigner in England as an example: “Which foreigner doesn't feel that way when he comes to England?” (Wittgenstein, 2000: TS 232; MS 135-137, 1947-1948). His well-known witty remark regarding English women can also be interpreted along these lines:

It is important for our approach, that someone may feel concerning certain people, that he will never know what goes on inside them. He will never understand them. (Englishwomen for Europeans.) (CV 84e)

His remarks on aesthetics also contribute a great deal to picture forms of life as isolated islands. Consider his remarks concerning the British sculptor Frank Dobson's ability to appreciate “Negro Art” (LC I, 27-28). Wittgenstein's fundamental idea is that Dobson's appreciation cannot be the same as the appreciation of an “educated Negro” because “Negro Art” plays different roles in their respective lives. The same applies to the appreciation of a “Negro” tunic by a European. Wittgenstein gives his own example:

[...] I say I appreciate a good Negro tunic –does this mean I would have one made, or that I would say (as at the tailor's): ‘No... this is too long’, or does it mean I say: ‘How charming!’? (LC I, 28)

Wittgenstein's insight is that it is unlikely that someone who does not belong to that form of life would get one done and that if he did, wearing it won't be the main interest behind his acquisition. Wittgenstein also believes that he won't be able to make the kind of comments that he is able to make at the tailor's regarding the correction of a suit. Furthermore, Wittgenstein seems to be equating a form of life and a culture in a particular time. For instance, in his discussion of the concept of “a cultured taste” (LC I, 25-26). This is particularly clear in LC I, 29:

Suppose Lewy has what is called a cultured taste in painting. This is something entirely different to what was called a cultured taste in the fifteenth century. An entirely different game was played. He does something entirely different with it to what a man did then.

In this regard, a revision of Wittgenstein's notion of “form of life” is much needed. Wittgenstein's general equation between a culture and a form of life needs to be revised in these times of extraordinary cultural diversity. Contemporary societies encompass multiple cultural forms, in such a way that different forms of life coexist, overlap and interact within the same culture. Identifying a culture with the frontiers of a country or with a linguistic community does not seem to make sense any longer, if it ever did. Contemporary linguistic communities, and contemporary societies in general, are culturally diverse on a hitherto unprecedented scale. Furthermore, as I have underscored somewhere else⁸, the last decades of the 20th century and the 21st century –deconstruction and postcolonial theories in particular– have made self-evident that understanding a particular culture requires understanding other cultures. For instance, we cannot understand Picasso's cubism without traditional African sculpture or French Impressionism without Japanese woodblock prints.

Could we develop architectural practices that fostered the understanding of meticulously interwoven forms of life, imbued with elements or character traits of each other? This kind of approach takes a stand against the conception of a single *human* form of life (Moyal-Sharrock, 2015), which is assumed by Rietveld

⁷ On Wittgenstein's use of ‘we’, see Sandis, 2019.

⁸Carla Carmona, “Using Wittgenstein's Philosophy to Erase Conceptual Misconceptions in Dance Practice”, forthcoming in *Revista de historiografía* (2019).

et al (2019: 301)⁹. I have drawn attention elsewhere to the need to ensure that our cities do not project over those who inhabit them a general human form of life, but, on the contrary, notice and preserve the dissimilarities, the details that differentiate forms of life from each other (Carmona, 2017).

I do not mean to abandon the idea of cultural identity. In this regard, I differ from the tendency to move from the intercultural to the transcultural to make sure that one avoids mere multiculturalism (Guasch, 2010). It is true that the accepted cohabitation of different cultural groups under the same framework of citizenship is not enough, but the solution does not lie in overcoming cultural differences through the promotion of individual subjectivity. The old identity-difference dichotomy that those who appeal to the “transcultural” wish to leave behind by strengthening the role of specific subjectivities, could well be tackled from the dialogical dimension of human identity. Our identity is not something that springs from our interior, but is built from interaction and dialogue with others (Taylor, 1994). The fact that cultural identities in contemporary societies are complex and multifaceted should only inspire us to move further in that direction.

In the next section we will see that Wittgenstein’s notion of *Übersichtlichkeit* can be useful in order to pursue what we want: *architecturing* the cultural diversity that is characteristic of contemporary societies and tracing how forms of life overlap.

3. Architecture as a synoptic view of a culture

Wittgenstein was after synoptic views, or surveyable representations, of our use of words:

A main source of our failure to understand is that we don’t have an *overview* of the use of our words. –Our grammar is deficient in surveyability. A surveyable representation produces precisely that kind of understanding which consists in ‘seeing connections’. Hence the importance of finding and inventing *intermediate links*.

The concept of a surveyable representation is of fundamental significance for us. It characterizes the way we represent things, how we look at matters. (Is this a ‘Weltanschauung’? (PI §122)

The expression has also been translated as “lucid presentation” or “perspicuous representation”. All of them fail to grasp the insight of the German expression. The concept in question is *übersichtliche Darstellung*, which refers to a presentation as if seen from above, an overview. Philosophy, according to Wittgenstein, ought to describe, and philosophical description was for him such an overview (of the use of our words):

Philosophical description gets its importance from the fact that it affords us an overview [Übersicht] which guards us against adopting a different system only because we do not see the right one. We yearn for a perspicuous representation, i.e., for a system, we do not see the right one, we are seduced into adopting a false system by the language or by some circumstance or other, and philosophy saves us by offering us the correct perspicuous representation. (Waismann & Wittgenstein, 2003: 124-125)

Let us go back to PI §122. It is a kind of “understanding which consists in ‘seeing connections’”, in which intermediate cases, “finding and inventing *intermediate links*” play a fundamental role. Wittgenstein compared the task of the philosopher to that of the geographer:

⁹ Rietveld et al (2018), mentioning Wittgenstein explicitly, hold the view that “the notion ‘form of life’ can refer both to a sociocultural practice and to a species”, in such a way that “within the human form of life there are many different sociocultural practices” (46). Their definition of affordance, which they interpret as “Wittgensteinian”, goes along the same lines: affordances “are not related to a particular individual but to an entire practice, to a form of life” (46), they “are relative to the abilities available in a form of life” (47). Rietveld et al also identify “builders, English language users, concert pianists, and academics”, as examples of forms of life within the overarching human form of life” (2018: 47). However, I hope to have made clear that Wittgenstein’s notion “form of life” cannot be identified with “a sociocultural practice” in the singular. For that matter, it is neither a mere aggregate of sociocultural practices. By contrast, such practices intertwine and are part of a worldview, the form of life in question. “Concert pianists” or “academics” share language games, but those language games that they share do not constitute by themselves a form of life (in Wittgenstein’s terms).

One difficulty with philosophy is that we lack a synoptic view. We encounter the kind of difficulty we should have with the geography of a country for which we had no map, or else a map of isolated bits. The country we are talking about is language, and the geography its grammar. We can talk about the country quite well, but when forced to make a map, we go wrong. (LWL 43)

We encounter problems to deal with the geography of a country for which we have not map. We face similar problems concerning the cultural diversity that is characteristic of contemporary societies. I would like to use Wittgenstein's metaphor of "the geography of a country for which we had not map" to shed light on our lack of understanding regarding the cultural diversity that surrounds us. We either "have no map" for that or "a map of isolated bits", in which the blank parts have to be filled with intermediate cases. Those intermediate cases are "intermediate links", which have to be found. I understand the overlap of different forms of life as instances of intermediate links in that context. In that regard, Wittgenstein leaves room for creativity: we can also invent them. Architecture, conceived as a synoptic view, can "invent" intermediate links. It can have an effect in how we relate to each other and shape society in that way.

My proposal is that certain architectural practices can be instances of such an overview. We need an architecture that is perspicuous regarding our understanding of our society, that is to say, that presents things by outlining their structure and relations, that makes clear the connections and correlations between the different forms of life that coexist, that materializes an intercultural description of how things are by making use of intermediate cases.

Wittgenstein's remark on the octahedron as a bird's eye view of the grammatical rules comes to mind:

An octahedron with the pure colors at the corner-points e.g. provides a rough representation of colour-space, and this is a grammatical representation, not a psychological one. [...] Using the octahedron as a representation gives us a bird's eye view of the grammatical rules. (PR §1, 51-52)¹⁰

The octahedron sheds light on the color-space. Likewise, buildings could be conceived as maps of all the routes and geographies regarding the cultural diversity of contemporary societies. Wittgenstein asserted that his "duty is to teach you the geography of a labyrinth, so that you may completely find your way about it" (Wittgenstein, 2000: 162b, 6v). For the sake of intercultural dialogue, it might be worth taking seriously certain architectural practices' potential to map cultural diversity. Building a parallelism between a philosophical problem (such as it was understood by Wittgenstein in PI §123) and an architectural one, the later could take the form: "I don't know my way about". After all, contemporary societies are also cultural labyrinths. As regards cultural diversity in contemporary societies, one could well say what Wittgenstein stated about language in PI §203:

[It] is a labyrinth of paths. You approach from *one* side and know your way about; you approach the same place from another side and no longer know your way about.

It is interesting to read from this point of view the foreword to *Philosophical Remarks* (PR):

This book is written for such men as are in sympathy with its spirit. This spirit is different from the one which informs the vast stream of European and American civilization in which all of us stand. That spirit expresses itself in an onwards movement, in building ever larger and more complicated structures; the other in striving after clarity and perspicuity in no matter what structure. The first tries to grasp the world by way of its periphery –in its variety; the second at its centre– in its essence. And so the first adds one construction to another, moving on and up, as it were, from one stage to the next, while the other remains where it is and what it tries to grasp is always the same. (7)

Let us ignore Wittgenstein's pessimism regarding the spirit of his times and focus instead on his differentiation between a kind of architecture that builds "ever larger and more complicated structures" and another

¹⁰ In German it reads: "Die Oktaeder-Darstellung ist eine übersichtliche Darstellung der grammatischen Regeln." (PR, footnote no. 1, p. 52).

kind that strives “after clarity and perspicuity”. Unlike the former, which approaches the world peripherally, perspicuous architecture grasps the world in its essence. It is this kind of approach within architectural practice that would be able to make visible the interconnections in the playgrounds of our contemporary societies. It would also play a big role in the cultivation of critical thinking, since it would offer many instances of such an ability to analyze and evaluate what surrounds us. Moreover, it would incite us to make use of such analytical abilities and thus contribute to their development.

Think of the project of the New Amsterdam Park. I understand New Amsterdam Park as such an overview. This is in fact quite literal. There are passages that seem to fly over the arrangement of the fleet of floating barges. From them, one can get a view from above of the whole. Likewise, the passages and shortcuts that interconnect the barges are a good example of “that kind of understanding which consists in ‘seeing connections’”, in which “finding and inventing *intermediate* links” is fundamental. Different socio-cultural groups are meant to explore the park freely and find and invent intermediate cases. For instance, seeing family resemblances between their interests and those of other cultural groups, or noticing similarities and differences between what motivates them to dedicate time to a particular activity and what motivates a different socio-cultural group. Deepening the understanding of others will contribute to a better understanding of one’s own socio-cultural group and to social cohesion. And gaining insight into what takes place in the park as a whole will shed light on the cultural diversity of the city, and on the cultural diversity of contemporary societies in general as an extension.

In the introduction, I said that architecture also plays a big role in the cultivation of shared values. In order to address that point, next I will explore Wittgenstein’s notion of *Weltanschauung* and apply it to architecture.

4. Architecture as a world view

While talking to Maurice O’Connor Drury, Wittgenstein compared the task of the philosopher and that of the architect. The situation was the following: Drury entered Wittgenstein’s rooms (which Wittgenstein had carefully chosen at the top of the staircase) and noticed that Wittgenstein had altered the proportions of the windows of the rooms by using strips of black paper. We are told that Wittgenstein said:

See what a difference it makes to the appearance of the room when the windows have the right proportion. –You think philosophy is difficult enough but I can tell you it is nothing to the difficulty of being a good architect. (Drury, 1981: 121).

The task of the architect is very difficult indeed. A little change in the way he organizes things can change its outlook dramatically, and this has a powerful impact on how we see things and live. After all,

Work on philosophy –like work *in* architecture in many respects– is really more work on oneself. On one’s own conception. On how one sees things. (And what one expects of them.) (CV 24e)

In the original German Wittgenstein used the preposition “an” to refer to “philosophy” and “oneself”, and the preposition “in” to refer to “architecture”. He again used “an” to refer to “how one sees things”:

Die Arbeit an der Philosophie ist –wie vielfach die Arbeit *in* der Architektur –eigentlich mehr die Arbeit an Einem selbst. An der eignen Auffassung. Daran, wie man die Dinge sieht. (Und was man von ihnen verlangt.) (CV 24)

The editors opted for printing in italics those words which were underlined only once in the original German. Wittgenstein underlined the preposition “in” before referring to architecture in order to underscore a difference in the parallel that he had drawn between philosophy and architecture. When one works on philosophy, one works on oneself, on how one sees things. Likewise, engaging *with* architecture in many respects involves working on one’s own conception of things. Architecture enables certain forms of interaction and this has a constitutive impact on our values. Historical buildings tell us much about how those who lived before us

conceived the world and human relations, and above all about how they lived. Ancient Roman homes are crystallizations of how their inhabitants viewed the world and enjoyed living; they incarnate a system of moral, socioeconomic, sexual or aesthetic values. That is also true of the traditional Japanese house, with its sliding panels or tatami floors. Or of the temples in Khajuraho, known for its erotic carvings. Not to mention all that we learnt in school about the philosophical ideas behind Gothic Cathedrals or Greek temples.

Wittgenstein refers to architecture as one of the forms that the spirit of a civilization might take in a remark that resembles the pessimism of what he wrote for the preface of PR:

This book is written for those who are in sympathy with the spirit in which it is written. This spirit is, I believe, different from that of the prevailing European and American civilization. The spirit of this civilization the expression of which is the industry, architecture, music, of present day fascism & socialism, is a spirit that is alien & uncongenial to the author. (CV 8e)

Wittgenstein's point is that architecture *expresses* the spirit of a civilization. The idea that architecture is *expressive* is fundamental to understand how Wittgenstein conceived architecture. It is well known that Wittgenstein often used music in order to clarify how language actually works. In a like manner, he used language to shed light on music. He referred to "phenomena akin to language" in music, and took Bach as a paradigm of it. Likewise, he found that there were such phenomena in architecture. As an example, he remarked on the kind of meaningful irregularity that one finds in Gothic architecture and referred explicitly to the towers of St. Basil's Cathedral.¹¹ However, the expressivity that interests us here has to do with a more primitive form of language: gesture.

Architecture is expressive due to its gestural character. Wittgenstein pointed out in several occasions the fact that architecture is a gesture. In fact, according to him, its gestural character is what differentiates between architecture and an ordinary functional building:

Architecture is a gesture. Not every purposive movement of the human body is a gesture. Just as little as every functional building is architecture. (CV 49e)

Remember the impression made by good architecture, that it expresses a thought. One would like to respond to it too with a gesture. (CV 26e)

We are told that "it expresses a thought". However, this expression might be misleading. Wittgenstein had an overall non-dualistic approach to language and the arts, including architecture. The thoughts, ideas or values expressed by architecture do not accompany the building in question. By contrast, they are incarnated in architecture and cannot be separated from it.

It is interesting that after a few pages in the same manuscript, he wrote that "the face is the soul of the body" (CV 26e). This is clearly connected to Wittgenstein's understanding of the inner-outer picture and his idea that there is such a thing as knowledge of our fellow human beings. The word he used for it was *Menschenkenntnis*. Wittgenstein rejected the idea that what goes on inside ourselves per se cannot be grasped from the outside. Our knowledge of our fellow human beings is above all an attitude that builds on the certainties that constitute the bedrock of our living, on our form of life.

The Cartesian inner-outer picture continues to leave detrimental marks on our artistic practices. Let us focus on architecture. Grandiloquence, pomposity or mannerism could be a result of conceiving that there is a gap between the inner and the outer in architecture, that is, that the thoughts, ideas or values expressed by architecture are independent from the buildings themselves and consequently ought to be underscored, made explicit, to make sure that they reach the viewer. What architecture ought to express is understood as the obscure inner of a human being that has to be spelled out and as a result there is no room left for the imagination of the viewer. For that matter, nor for her enactive agency.

¹¹ CV 40e.

I am aware that this paragraph has been understood in the opposite way, as if the irregularity regarding Gothic architecture were only pseudo-linguistic. For instance, see Rubio, 2019 in this volume.

Observe Rush Rhees’s recollection regarding Wittgenstein reaction to Canada House in Trafalgar Square. Rhees and Wittgenstein had been talking about playing Brahms in their times. According to Wittgenstein, playing Brahms in their times as one played Brahms in Brahms’s times was meaningless and rhetorical. As a result, one ought to develop:

A nose for what was music and what was rhetoric. The way Myra Hess played it would have been music in Brahms’s day, but now it’s just rhetoric; and whatever it gives us, it isn’t Brahms. Wittgenstein pointed to Canada House, which the builders were just finishing. This architecture has followed a tradition by taking over certain rhetorical forms, but it says nothing in them. Large scale, meant to fit within a great culture. But –waving his hand towards it– “that’s *bombast*: that’s Hitler and Mussolini.” He would not have said that another architect might have built one that *wasn’t*. Not today, and not here. And Canada House helped to show why Hitler and Mussolini *had* to work with bombast. As it showed how truly they were one in spirit with us.” (Rhees, 1981: 225-226).

Wittgenstein manifested here a rather Platonic approach to rhetoric, understood as sophistry, mere persuasion and demagoguery. Like in the case of music, one ought to develop a nose for what was architecture and what was rhetoric, and Wittgenstein was doing his bit. Wittgenstein perceived Canada House as an example of the kind of architecture that he identified in the preface to PR as an “onwards movement”, which built “ever larger and more complicated structures”, but which had nothing to express. Rhees’s recollection ends with Wittgenstein’s pessimistic conception of his times. Another architect could have not done it better. That was the nature of the times, and that is what showed how close in spirit their times were to Hitler and Mussolini. One could conclude: well, there was nothing to make explicit, and therefore they ended up with mere bombast. With no spirit or with a poor spirit, that is the only thing they could do. However, there is more than that to it. The core of the problem lies in the attempt to make the spirit explicit. Indeed, as Wittgenstein remarked, “it is a great temptation to want to make the spirit explicit” (CV 11e).

This is related to Wittgenstein’s idea that the work of art conveys itself. Wittgenstein is criticizing Leo Tolstoy’s dualistic conception of a work of art and its meaning, Tolstoy’s idea that the work of art conveys a feeling. By contrast, Wittgenstein tries to underscore the intrinsic interdependence between the content and the art work by putting it in terms of a “felt expression”:

And you really might call it, if not the expression of a feeling, an expression of feeling, or a felt expression. And you might say too that people who understand it to that extent ‘resonate’ with it, respond to it. You might say: The work of art does not seek to convey *something else*, just itself. As, if I pay someone a visit, I don’t wish simply to produce such & such feelings in him, but above all to pay him a visit, & naturally I also want to be well received. (CV 67e)

Wittgenstein’s concerns in the above paragraph are connected to his idea that architecture is a gesture. The everyday act of paying someone a visit can shed light on the gestural character of architecture. Paying someone a visit is a gesture. The purpose of paying someone a visit is not producing certain feelings in him but above all paying him a visit. My gesture won’t leave my host indifferent. Hosts respond to their fellow visitors with further gestures. Naturally, what we want is to be well received. What we want is a welcoming gesture. But in each case, we cannot separate the gesture and its “content”, or “meaning”. There is no such a thing as the meaning of a work of art¹², or for that matter, a piece of architecture. Likewise, there is no such a thing as the “meaning” of a gesture. The gesture and its so-called meaning are one and the same thing. (This insight is behind Wittgenstein’s so-called formalism, which is no formalism whatsoever.) In order to convey this inseparability, one could use the expression “gesture-thought” or “gesture-feeling”, or better than that, “gesture-experience”.

It is also worth considering in this context the primitive character that Wittgenstein attributed to language (OC §475). Our words are gestures. Words substitute gestures. Words and gestures are equivalent. We learn to use a word like “beautiful” as an interjection. Wittgenstein thought that imagining words as faces (what would be the face for pompous?; would it be always the same?) sheds light on the gestural character

¹² Peter Lamarque has defended this idea in the context of literary interpretation (Lamarque, 2019). His arguments could well be applied to architecture. What is the meaning of the Colloseum?

of words. Words do not add anything to the communicative process. Actually, if anything, gestures are more precise. In Wittgenstein's words: "In fact, if we want to be exact, we do use a gesture or a facial expression"¹³.

We are continuously encountering and experiencing architecture in our everyday life. Buildings continuously talk to us. Whether we like it or not, they gesture at us, and we respond more often than what we are actually aware of. Those gestures are affordances, possibilities for action and interaction, which mediate in our social ways of being with one another. In that sense, it is possible to attribute to architecture the pedagogical character that Wittgenstein attributed to cinema. Let me draw your attention to Wittgenstein's 1931 remark about teaching philosophy: "Someone who teaches philosophy nowadays gives his pupil foods, not because they are to his taste, but in order to change his taste" (CV 25e). A genuine work of architecture could be understood as food for the spirit. It has the potential to modify our frameworks, or at least to have such an effect on us so as to shake them and make room for change. In other words, it has the potential to change how we live, and how we relate to the world and our fellow human beings.

Architecture has had a huge impact on how human beings relate to nature, and on how we understand that relationship. A short visit to Taniguchi Yoshio's Gallery of Horyu-ji Treasures at the Tokyo National Museum can make us reconsider our ordinary ways of relating to nature. Not to mention the kind of transformative experience that a sensitive foreigner might have during her first visit to the magnificent gardens of Kyoto's temples. Likewise, intercultural architectural practices could deepen our understanding of cultural diversity in contemporary societies, foster certain behaviors and approaches and weaken others. Hopefully, some of those strengthened behaviors and approaches might consolidate into shared intercultural values.

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¹³ LC I, 10.

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