Festival Architecture

Edited by Sarah Bonnemaison
and Christine Macy

Festival Architecture

This book focuses on the ephemeral architecture built for festivals, investigating how these constructions played a role in the development of Western architectural and urban theory. Festival architecture, throughout the ages, has allowed architects to experiment with new ideas, new forms and new spatial arrangements.

Arranged in historical periods from antiquity to the modern era, the analyses of specific festivals are set in relation to contemporary ideas and theories in architecture and urban design. From coronations to consecrations, and carnivals to world expositions, festival architecture brought vivid color and sensory delight to the cities of the past. The wealth of illustrations in this book opens a window on to the enduring architectural meaning and importance of festivals in European cities.

With contributions by architectural historians specializing in this area, *Festival Architecture* will appeal to all students and researchers interested in the traditions of festival architecture and the legacies remaining for this exciting branch of architecture and urban design.

Sarah Bonnemaison and **Christine Macy** have been involved in festival architecture since 1987, designing, lecturing and writing about it. Their book *Architecture and Nature: Creating the American Landscape* (Routledge 2003) won the 2005 Alice Davis Hitchcock Prize from the Society of Architectural Historians. They teach design and architectural history at Dalhousie University in Canada.

The Classical Tradition in Architecture

Series Editor: Caroline van Eck

Leiden University, Netherlands

Classical architecture not only provided a repertoire of forms and building types capable of endless transformation; it was also a cultural actor and provided cultural capital, and was used to create political and religious identities. This series provides a forum for its interdisciplinary study, from antiquity to the present day. It aims to publish first-class and groundbreaking scholarship that re-examines, reinterprets or revalues the classical tradition in the widest sense. The series will deal with classicism as a cultural phenomenon, a formal language of design, but also with its role in establishing the agenda, method and grammar of inquiry in Western history of art and architecture and recent reconsiderations of these roles.

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We dedicate this book to Michel Bonnemaison (1923–2007), who encouraged and supported us in this research from its very beginning but did not see it bear this fruit.

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1

Introduction

Sarah Bonnemaison and Christine Macy

What is festival architecture?

Reflecting on the origins of architecture, we may think of the Egyptian pyramids, the palaces of Babylonia or the temples of ancient Greece. But equally ancient, and equally significant to the history of architecture, were the temporary structures erected for religious rites in the ancient world. The tabernacle of the Jews, for example, was a portable enclosure of wooden posts and fabric, a place of sacrifice and worship that was carried through the wilderness during the Exodus, and that influenced the form of the temple in the tenth century BCE and all synagogues to follow. Like Abel to Cain, or the nomad to the farmer, ephemeral architecture offers another face to the history of architecture. If one were to map this "other" history in parallel to the more familiar chronicle of monuments and ruins, the relationship between these two kinds of architecture would be informative and at times surprising, in the way each has influenced the other—that Greek temples, for example, are stone versions of their wooden predecessors is just one instance among many.

This other history is not restricted to religious constructions, it also includes architectural works commissioned by rulers to celebrate and proclaim their reign. In the Europe of emperors, popes, and princes, all the major architects had experience in staging festivals at courts or in cities—Andrea Palladio, Inigo Jones, Gianlorenzo Bernini, and Niccolo Servandoni to name just a few. With the emergence of modern society, architects remained just as involved in staging world expositions and government spectacles: from the master planning efforts of Charles Garnier in Paris (1889), Daniel Burnham in Chicago (1893), or Albert Speer in Nuremberg (1933), to the more discrete contributions of Mies van der Rohe in Barcelona (1928), Le Corbusier in Brussels (1958), or Sverre Fehn in Venice (1962). Architects working on festivals were assured of a large audience for their efforts. They knew that spectacular effects or ingenious artistry in the design of a triumphal arch or elaborate stage setting might lead to later commissions from influential patrons. Festival architecture was designed to persuade and convince and for this reason it has been, and continues to be, built in all the societies of Europe.

Archival records tell us that festivals and spectacles were well funded by the ruling classes in order to magnify and glorify their reign. All the arts were mobilized in the service of such events—be it a coronation or an investiture; a baptism, marriage or funeral of a privileged person. Poets and painters, musicians and dancers, masters of the culinary arts, fireworks specialists, sculptors, and of course, architects—all of these artists were called on to contribute to these events that also involved priests, heads of state, royal retinues, merchants, warriors, citizens, commoners, peasants, servants, and slaves.

Because state festivals were so important, they were generally well recorded, sometimes exaggeratedly so. Their themes were put down for posterity, persons of note were so noted, and magnificent processions were described by the number of participants, the richness of their retinue and the routes of their parades. The same could be said for the theatrical performances, scenography, choreography, menus, livery, fireworks, and all the other appurtenances of these events. As a result, the historian has a great deal of material to work with in attempting to understand events long past. But the study of festivals also poses certain frustrations. Most crucially, the architecture has long since disappeared. While the historian of built works can generally return to the subject of their investigation, freshly examining it to discover new or previously overlooked aspects, the historian of festival architecture must restrict her- or himself to the archive. And there too, the picture is not clear. Written records may lack images, etchings and broadsheets be misattributed, and accounts distorted by the bias of the chronicler. Sometimes one record directly contradicts another, depending on why it was made and for whom.

Architects' view of ephemera and historians' views on ritual

The modern distinction between solid and ephemeral creates an additional difficulty for the historian of festival architecture: its marginal position in architectural historiography. When permanent is set against temporary, the opposition, Jacques Derrida would argue, is not an equal one. Permanent architecture has long been viewed by architects and architectural historians as more significant and ultimately more central to architecture and its history. Architects are meant to design buildings that last. While ephemeral works have their place, their insubstantiality and their transitory nature give them attributes of being superficial, even fake. Yet ephemerality is the joker's card in architectural history. Often, it is used as a foil to enhance the value of more durable constructions. Adolf Loos, for example, was outspoken on the value of permanence when he wrote that "only a very small part of architecture belongs to art: the tomb and the monument. Everything else that fulfils a function is to be excluded from the domain of art" (Loos 1985). In this assertion, Loos slyly insinuates that most architecture is not only utilitarian, but perhaps fleeting—at least when compared with the two categories of architecture he awards the status of art.

Yet in the mid-nineteenth century, architectural histories by Karl Bötticher and Gottfried Semper presented ephemeral constructions as the very origin of architecture. These theorists viewed it as the opposite of permanent architecture, as the first built sketches, so to speak, of buildings that followed. These new theorists saw architecture as an imitation, not of forms or styles, but of human action. According to Mari Hvattum, Semper was instrumental in developing this argument by placing ritual in the center of both architectural form and the craft of architecture:

> No longer a history of building types or orders, [this] was a history of the evolving techniques that brought architecture into existence and the human situations for which buildings were built. It was a history in which the primacy of structure was given over to surface, and where the obsession with stability—so characteristic of eighteenth century Neo-classicism—gave way to a new interest in the ephemeral. [. . .] Unlike the neo-classical idea of architecture as a perpetual imitation of a [. . .] primitive hut, these new theorists saw architecture as an imitation [. . .] of human action. From this point of view, the ephemeral decoration of the altar, the precarious architecture of the procession or, in Semper's words, the "haze of the carnival candles" (*Der Stil* vol. I, §60), were not just phenomena at the margins of architectural discourse but constituting the very essence of architecture. Such ephemera were seen as primordial examples of the mimetic transformation from the ritual act to its built embodiment. As such, they were poetic works in the Aristotelian sense; works capable of setting into play a creative interpretation of human life and action.
>
> (Hvattum 2002)

In short, for Semper, the origins of architecture lay in the universal human need to create order through play and ritual.

> "in the wreath, the bead necklace, the scroll, the circular dance and the rhythmic tone that attends it, the beat of an oar [. . .] These are the beginnings out of which music and architecture grew." From its ephemeral beginnings in ritual movement, the ordering activity of art is embodied in the artistic motifs, which in turn are fused in works of architecture.
>
> (Hvattum 2004: 66)

More than a century later, Joseph Rykwert expressed some of this intuition in his *The Idea of a Town*, where he demonstrated how Roman towns were founded on elaborate rituals, and their forms—such as city walls, gate, and major institutions—were derived from those rituals (Rykwert 1976). His work contributed to a renewed interest in the relationship between festival and urbanism. Working in a much broader comparative spectrum, Spiro Kostof's concern for the function of civic rituals in the analysis of urban form has influenced many historians working today (Kostof 1991). And of course George

Hersey's *The Lost Meaning of Classical Architecture* explores in detail the original significance of the classical orders, as rooted in the religious rituals of the ancient Greeks (Hersey 1988).

Caroline van Eck's contribution to this volume tackles the issue of ephemera in festivals head on by focusing on 'paper architecture'. She suggests the demarcation between virtual and real, between solid and ephemeral was not as clear in seventeenth-century England as we may think it is now. She begins her essay by informing the reader that only a few significant works of architecture were actually completed in Britain over the first half of the seventeenth century, while much ephemeral and "paper" architecture was produced. Looking at Henry Wotton's treatise *Elements of Architecture* and the masque designs of Inigo Jones, she explores the concepts that viewers of that time may have used to understand such architecture. The important aspect, she suggests, for a seventeenth-century audience was that these works represented a view of architecture as politics by another means. In other words, they employed the classical rhetorical view of art not as an object of enjoyment for its own sake, but as a means of persuasion.

Maarten Delbeke's essay tests the hypothesis that ephemeral architecture contributes to the signification and subsequent reception of permanent architecture. He explores the Roman jubilee of 1625 and the dedication of the new basilica of Saint Peter's the following year, as two moments which frame ideas that were to be communicated by a new, giant bronze Baldacchino designed by Bernini for the center of Saint Peter's. To do this, he analyses the significance of the ephemeral constructions built for the jubilee and the dedication—particularly the *talamo*, a portable shrine carried by the Archconfraternity of SS Rosario—and explores their intended effects on Roman audiences and others who read reports of the festivals which codified and expanded their impact.

The essay of Nancy Stieber explores the question of fakeness and authenticity in relation to the conceptualization of a new architectural style in turn of the twentieth-century Netherlands. Willem Kromhout's designs for *Oud Holland* at the Amsterdam World's Fair of 1895 was an ersatz city involving the meticulous historical reconstruction of buildings from across the Netherlands —an extremely popular attraction that drew significant interest among his contemporaries. Yet, influenced by H.P. Berlage's formulation of architectural style that critiqued historicism, Kromhout attacked the tradition of "fake" arches, as he designed the decoration of Amsterdam for the investiture of Queen Wilhelmina in 1898.

Festivals and the architectural object

There is a large body of art and architectural historiography on European festivals, especially state spectacles in the Renaissance and Baroque eras. In the art historical tradition, these studies focus on an architectural object—a royal entry, a triumphal arch, or a display built for fireworks—interpreting their architectural treatment and the allegorical iconography within a stylistic sequence. *Les Fêtes de la Renaisssance* for example, a three volume series edited by Jean Jacquot following a conference on the subject in 1956, remains a reference for art historians interested in Renaissance festivals; as the extensive writings of Marcello Fagiolo and Maurizio Fagiolo dell'Arco are for the Italian Baroque (Jacquot 1956; Fagiolo 1980 and 1997; Fagiolo dell'Arco and Carandini 1977–8; Fagiolo dell'Arco 1997). Such studies generally focus on the artifacts built for an event, and situate them within a historical and often stylistic continuum. In 1984, the architectural historians Werner Oechslin and Anja Buschow published *Festarchitektur*, focusing on the transformation of cities through ephemera built to express the spectacle of absolutism—primarily in the seventeenth century but also up to the present day. Rich in images and thought provoking, this book remains an important work on the historiography of European festival architecture. The art historians Frances Yates and Roy Strong both see festivals as instruments of rhetoric and political power. Through their study of Renaissance and Baroque festivals, they interpret the meaning of festival architecture in the contexts of its production and reception. Yates, for instance, carefully analyzed a series of tapestries which represented the festivals of the Valois court in sixteenth-century France, by exploring the political context of these events and keeping the focus on their rhetorical agenda and the goals of those who commissioned them (Yates 1959). Strong's *Art and Power* offers an overview of festival architecture from 1450 to 1650, analysing the representation of royal power as it is practiced in festivals across European nations.

In this volume, Diane Ghirardo—like Strong and Yates—looks at royal entries, but she turns her attention to those created for noble brides. Elaborate entries for noble brides were among the few public celebrations of women in the Italian Renaissance. As such, these ceremonies occupied an important niche in the celebratory arrivals of important personages into Italian cities. Ghirardo examines the temporary constructions, from clothing to canopies to confectionary treats, created for bridal entries between 1473 and 1598 in the city of Ferrara. Through abundant detail, she is able to explore the network of symbols and meanings embedded in these events and what they reveal about gender, status, and the state.

Margherita Azzi Visentini's essay discusses Venetian state spectacle in the San Marco complex—including the basilica, the doge's palace, piazzas, and the wider basin—and traces the development of this exceptional urban ensemble over several centuries in relation to the state festivals which were held there. In an expansive and comprehensive survey of events, personages, architectural commissions, historical records, and painterly depictions, she convincingly argues that the Venetian Republic used lavish spectacles to assert its eternal glory in the face of political decline—bringing to light the rhetorical dimensions of festival architecture. Intriguingly, she also stresses that festivals were a central influence on the design of permanent architectural monuments by architects such as Bartolomeo Bon, Mauro Condussi, Andrea Palladio, Sebastiano Serlio, Jacopo Sansovino, and many others.

Festivals and urban form

Both Ghirardo and Azzi Visentini point to the interest of festival historians in the role of celebrations at the scale of the city and in urban design. Mona Ozouf's influential work on French revolutionary festivals stands as a benchmark in this regard. She introduced new analytical tools, such as parade route typologies and the choreography of audiences, in her explorations of the didactic symbolism of ephemera built for state festivities in the first years after the revolution. These state festivals gave physical form to new ideas about liberty, transparency, historical memory, and the role of the public, as they helped to forge a new sense of national identity in a turbulent era (Ozouf 1988).

Eric Monin's essay in this volume takes this wider perspective to the study of eighteenth-century French public festivals and their effect on officials responsible for urban beautification. He is able to show how, for a few days, festivals functioned as urban design proposals for improvements to the city, using alignments, regularity, mirroring, and other visual effects. Far from being merely ephemeral extravaganzas, Monin argues, these festivals worked deeply in the spatial imagination of governmental officials and of citizens.

The essay by Robert Weddle interprets the nightly light shows along the Seine River created for the 1937 world's fair in Paris. As in Monin's essay, it becomes clear that visual alignments are seen as an expression of urban beauty. Weddle argues that these ephemeral manifestations held an importance that transcended their sub-architectural status. The light and music festivities orchestrated by the architects Eugène Beaudouin and Marcel Lods for the fair exemplify one of the central theme of modernity—how to put technology to work in innovative urban designs.

Diane Favro's essay presents ancient Rome through the lens of its Megalensis festival to show an intense reciprocity of viewing between spectators and monuments during the festival. We discover, for example, that Romans believed sculptures and buildings, as well as divinities, could see and feel; that statues were not only seen by their observers, but were understood to look back at them. In an extraordinary reconstruction of the sensorial experience of participants in these events—visual, aural, haptic, and kinetic—she shows how this festival was deeply integrated in its urban context and vice versa.

Contribution of other disciplines

To better understand the cultural and political dimensions of festivals, it is at times necessary to reach out to other disciplines, such as folklore studies, anthropology, and literary criticism. The search for larger patterns across time and place by structural anthropologists, for example, helps us to discern deeper relations between permanent and ephemeral constructions in urban life. Arnold van Gennep's concept of "rites of passage" and Victor Turner's metaphor of "liminality" are fundamental references in this regard. Although these works look for fundamental principles operating in festivals in synchronic, rather than diachronic terms, they offer useful concepts to the historian of festivals.

Van Gennep's *The Rites of Passage* is an extensive study of traditional celebrations of life's transformative moments such as birth, puberty, marriage and, death. Van Gennep believed that while rites of passage may differ in detail from culture to culture and one event to another, they share certain features and a common social function. Traveling to remote villages in the French countryside, he documented the different forms taken by essentially the same set of ritual practices. The result was a twenty volume work which remains an extraordinary document of rural customs and rituals in the early twentieth century, many of which are no longer practiced. He was the first anthropologist to propose that rites of passage share a common structure, composed of three phases he identified as separation, transition, and incorporation. In the 1960s, this theory was taken up by another anthropologist, Victor Turner, who applied the idea of personal rites of passage to a study of large contemporary rituals, from modern-day religious pilgrimages to youth gatherings such as Woodstock. The idea that such different events might share a common structure was appealing at a time when anthropology was influenced by structuralism. The value of van Gennep's and Turner's work lies in their awareness of the symbolism of space and place. In one example from Turner:

> the passage from one social status to another is often accompanied by a parallel passage in space, a geographical moment from one place to another. This may take the form of a mere opening of doors or the literal crossing of a threshold such as the groom carrying the bride over the threshold of their new home.
>
> (Turner 1982: 25)

The workings of rites of passage particularly interested Turner—he called these *liminal*, deriving the term from the Latin word for margin, or threshold. During a liminal phase, according to Turner, participants are stripped of their social status and removed from social structures. Yet, their secular powerlessness may be compensated for by a sacred power derived from the resurgence of nature when structural power is removed, and from the transference of sacred knowledge (Turner 1979).

Anthropologists have also tended to turn their attention to popular, rather than elite practices. This too, is useful for our study here, since most of the perspectives we have discussed so far have been of state-sponsored spectacles. Carnival is the opposite of this: it is power from the bottom up, an expression of subversive power that consumes and ridicules everything in its wake. The idea of carnival has been theorized in the twentieth century by Mikhail Bakhtin (in the field of literature criticism) and Natalie Zemon Davis, an historian who was influenced by anthropological studies and particularly by Turner. To a great extent these two scholars have outlined how carnival and the carnivalesque is viewed in scholarly circles today. Bakhtin saw in carnivals the authentic and utopian expression of "popular" power, immediate, empowering, and disrespectful. Carnival was the second life of the people, who for a time entered into the utopian realm of community, freedom, equality, and abundance (Bakhtin 1984: 9). Davis has a less idealistic but equally empowering view of carnival, seeing in it the possibility to present alternatives, if only fleeting, to rigid societal norms.

Christine Macy's essay in this volume explores the capacity of disempowered groups to use the anarchic quality of carnival to forge a place of authority within the fault lines of closed social structures. Many historians treat the attack on carnival as a victory over popular culture, first by the absolutist state and then by the middle classes, a process which is viewed as the more or less complete destruction of popular festivities: the end of carnival. By the nineteenth century they argue, urban carnival was perceived as an offensive and threatening behavior of the lower classes, and was avoided by the urban middle class (Stallybrass and White 1986). Yet Macy shows the middle class in nineteenth century Basel using carnival license to mount a directed assault on a social system that excluded them, and to do this in the space of the city—effectively creating public spaces and a realm of public opinion that favored their interests in the rapidly industrializing city. Through carnival, she argues, new immigrant groups succeeded in gaining citizenship and a base for political power in that closed society.

The essay by Sarah Bonnemaison shows the recurrent figure of revolution in the events that took place in Paris during May 1968, exploring its impact on French views of culture and street life. She uses this construct to present the revolt of May 68 as an urban festival, interpreting the unique mixture of celebration and political engagement that took place in the streets of Paris as an example of Turner's liminal phase, acted out by a generation of young Parisians. The overturning of ingrained attitudes towards the street and what might happen there, realized in its most dynamic form in the barricades and protests of that month, carried over to an occupation of the abandoned central markets of Les Halles and later, in a more formalized manner, in the design of the Center Pompidou. She argues that May 68 and, in a more limited way, the new museum as a machine for showing art, reworked the festive ideal first developed by Jean-Jacques Rousseau.

Conclusion

Each of the essays in this volume addresses significant issues raised by the study of festival architecture as it was developed in Europe. In different ways, they explore the dualities of ephemerality and permanence, issues around participation, the urban imaginary, and the rhetorical function of communicating to and convincing crowds—mostly in the service of ruling elites, but sometimes against them. What stands out is the public aspect of such events and their architecture and their power to generate spatial imagination. To restate the words of Semper, the "haze of the carnival candles" is not merely a phenomenon at the margins of architecture, rather, it lies at the essence of all architecture. For these reasons and more, festival architecture will continue to seduce architects and historians alike.

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2

The festive experience

Roman processions in the urban context

Diane Favro

In the third of his famous ten books, Vitruvius objected to the close spacing of columns on Roman temples arguing that, "when matrons come up by the steps to give thanks, they cannot approach between the columns arm in arm but in single file" (*De arch.* 3.3.3). The brief passage reinforces the close interaction between ancient buildings and ritual processions. Throughout the Roman era, festivals and physical environments danced a synergistic *pas de deux*, with developments in one impacting developments in the other. At Rome, the exchange was especially potent. By the late Republic the capital boasted 132 public festivals a year; to these were added innumerable private celebrations that likewise occupied public spaces (Carcopino 1940: 202–6; Scullard 1981). Processions, games, rites, and other festivities energized the cityscape, and shaped architectural and urban design. As communal undertakings involving a large percentage of the urban population, such events reaffirmed collective religious, political, and social agendas. Occupying diverse and often numerous urban sites festivals also underscored the strong link between all Romans and the physical cityscape of their capital. As a result, buildings and locales acted as important participants in kinetic spectacles (Favro 1999). The symbiotic relationship between city and festivals naturally impacted the structure, nature, and perception of both. Researchers have considered how the Romans designed cities to engage kinetic viewers, choreographing festival routes to exploit the *genius loci* of various sites and buildings along specific linear routes (MacDonald 1982; Favro 1993). Less deliberation has been given to the experiential filters through which this exchange occurred.

Roman urban processions were full-bodied interactive events operating in four dimensions. Unfortunately, in most instances data is incomplete about the routes, environments, choreography, and overall experience of specific events. Furthermore, research has been constrained by the limitations of traditional analytical and representational tools (Figure 2.1). In particular, the widespread use of two-dimensional drawings has promoted thinking about

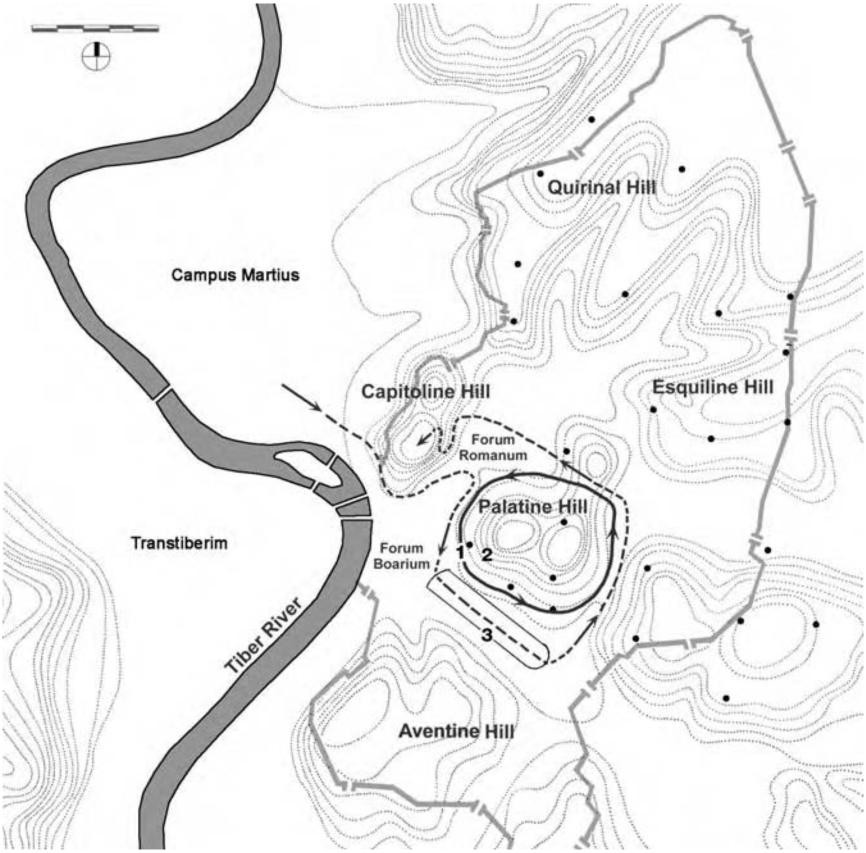

Figure 2.1 Map of Rome showing Roman Forum, Palatine, Lupercal (1), Temple of Magna Mater (2), Circus Maximus (3), routes of the Lupercalia (solid line) and triumph (dashed line), and Sacraria Argeorum (solid circles). Plan by author.

festival pathways as linear pathways too frequently shown on topographically undistinguished urban plans. The small scale of three-dimensional physical models such as that of the famous Plastico of Constantinian Rome makes them difficult to maneuver through, and thus has discouraged the study of urban movement and multi-dimensional analysis. The advent of digital reconstruction technologies is today promoting more full-bodied, holistic investigations, refocusing attention on the four-dimensional and experiential aspects of historic urban environments. In virtual reality simulations researchers can select their view point and move in real-time through spaces; as a result, the tool encourages holistic analysis of how the cityscape, festival events, and participants interacted (Favro 2006). Such considerations in turn lead to larger questions about how the experiential interpretation of physical environments is constituted.

Viewing, hearing, and all sensing are not just physiologically determined, they are culturally mediated. That is, each culture develops shared ideas about who should see what and how, spatial crowding, definitions of hot and cold, and so forth. For example, Vitruvius argued that climate shaped the psychology of every region's occupants, chauvinistically locating the ideal mentality in Italy (*De arch.* 6.1). Other texts give tantalizing hints about the experience of ancient festivals. Since the 1970s scholars have begun to explore the period eye of the Romans, drawing upon the aesthetic of perception pioneered by literary critics and art historians (Baxandall 1972; Bryson 1988; Nelson 2000). Most of this work has centered on the gaze and viewing in relation to artworks and the domestic realm (Bek 1980; Clarke 1991; Bergmann 1994 and 2002; Elsner 1995 and 2007; Frederick 2002). Other sensorial reactions, including aural, haptic, and kinetic, as well as the symbiotic interaction of all the senses, have been less scrutinized. In particular, more research is needed on the cultural construction of space and time. The synergy between ancient processional festivals and the city is well suited to an initial exploration of visuality and spatiality. Both Rome and ritual processions were dynamic; both involved Romans of every class, and covered large areas; both have been studied closely. Exploration of Roman experientiality in relation to festivals along with the examination of a representative event, the Megalensis, provide a more nuanced analysis of the topic.[1]

The cultural perception of Roman festivals

Scholars quite rightly question whether it is possible to fully recreate and understand Roman perceptual responses. Any contemporary investigation is compromised by modern socio-cultural prejudices, as well as by our informed perspective imbued with a broad temporal and topical knowledge of antiquity (Sharrock 2002). Similar arguments, however, could restrict modern studies of sensory habits since any given investigator never has exactly the same social background or personal experiences as the subject. Furthermore, all cultural analysis would be precluded if constrained by the inability to enter fully the mind of historic individuals. What is especially problematic for modern scholars is the fuzziness of perceptual analysis which, unlike hard historical information or even an identifiable soft, socially and politically constituted *zeitgeist*, cannot be calibrated or confirmed. Such drawbacks, however, should not preclude scholarly investigations, though appropriate caveats must be repeatedly articulated. Clearly, researchers in experiential studies must contextualize their investigations in a particular culture and period, and exercise due diligence in acknowledging the limitations of perceptual explorations shaped by limited available data and modern analytical approaches.

For the Roman world, the majority of preserved information is from an upper-class, male, mono-perspective. Only in recent years have the researchers' gaze focused on the viewing and sensorial responses of non-elite Romans (Clarke 2003: 34–41, 169–70). Textual, pictorial, and archaeological references are now being carefully analyzed for evidence of broader and more diverse responses. In addition, modern investigators are acknowledging that the ancient anthropomorphization of statues and environments was not solely abstract and iconic. The Romans believed sculptures and buildings, as well as divinities, could see and feel. Thus, the reciprocity of viewing must always be considered. A statue was not only seen by observers; it in turn looked back at them and often assumed other human roles (Vasaly 1993; Gregory 1994; Elsner 2000: 52). Discussing temples Vitruvius wrote, "the very images may seem to rise up and gaze upon those who make vows and sacrifices" (*De arch.* 4.5.1). In numismatic and artistic depictions cult statues are shown looking outward from temple interiors, recalling a viewing exchange that occurred during festivals when temple doors were open (Zanker 1997: 183). The most privileged viewers were, of course, the gods themselves who in most cases had panoptical sight; for example, Ovid described Apollo as having "orbs that view the world," while human observers were constrained by physiological as well as social limitations on seeing (*Met.* 2.31–3). As a result, Roman viewers assigned different meaning to different vistas. Vitruvius explained:

> The look of a building when seen close at hand is one thing, on a height it is another, not the same in an enclosed place, still different in the open, and in all these cases it takes much judgment [by the architect] to decide what is to be done.
>
> (*De arch.* 6.2.2)

Roman architects, artists, and patrons clearly operated with observers in mind. The location of visually rich ornament and important sculptural programs high on buildings where they could not be fully appreciated by the human viewers has been cited in counter argument to this premise. However, continued improvement in the legibility of such features from one project to another affirms the acknowledgement of discerning human observers. For example, the frustration experienced by Romans looking at the crowded relief figures on Trajan's Column led to the enlargement and simplification of images on the Column of Marcus Aurelius (Zanker 1997: 189; Clarke 2003: 32–41). Furthermore, elaborate articulation of elevated elements explicitly acknowledged the need for divine as well as earthbound viewers to approve and validate events.

While discussions of Roman perception should be grounded temporally and physically, in many cases the lack of specificity in the texts and archaeological remains make such a goal unattainable. Cautious consideration of the *longue durée* piecing together fragmentary evidence allows for some generalizations and the tracing of evolutionary changes as viewing habits transformed over time (Braudel 1969). Zanker has argued that in late Republican architecture simple visual slogans conveyed a potent and legible content (Zanker 1997: 179–91). With repetition and a devaluation of meaning in the Imperial period such imagery no longer caught the eye. In response architectural decoration became increasingly extravagant to attract continued attention. Conversely, private processions such as those for funerals which had enlivened the cityscape during the Republic relocated to private residential contexts and declined in frequency during the Empire, supplanted by state extravaganzas (Bodel 1999). In general, with a decline in political power, patricians became less interested in being seen (Gabelmann 1984; Benoist 1999).

Seeing the festival

Observation was essential to festivals. In fact, the Latin *spectare*, "to see," was closely tied to spectacles (Bergmann and Kondoleon 1999: 11). Seeing provided information and stimulated emotions. Cicero wrote:

> I cannot say whether it is a natural instinct or a kind of illusion, but when we see the places where we are told that the notables of the past spent their time, it is far more moving than when we hear about their achievements or read their writings.
>
> (*Fin.* 5.2)

Visual participation in public festivals had deep communal value, especially in the capital city. Elsner posited that the Romans had a ritual-centered visuality derived from the close viewing of festivals (Elsner 2000: 55). The collective energy pulsating through Rome during festivals, as well as the collective visual focus on the same event at the same time, certainly intensified the viewing experience. Complex rites defined and sanctified these events; all were closely scrutinized to ensure no ritual improprieties occurred (cf. Cic. *Har. resp.* 22). Such heightened viewing was not limited solely to the immediate ritual act, but expanded beyond to encompass the surrounding physical urban setting. In particular, Roman festivals directed the collective gaze on the environments of Rome which in turn had been shaped by acknowledged viewing hierarchies, kinetic interpretation, and carefully sequenced choreography.

Status affected every aspect of ancient viewing, especially in the Republic. The very act of being seen imparted *dignitas* on the visual target, since visibility implied honesty. Members of the elevated patrician class stood as exemplars, and thus as objects of the collective gaze.[2] "Being, for a Roman, was being seen," as Barton has noted (Barton 2002: 220). To be looked at implied inherent value in Roman society. Cicero spoke of "observance (*observantia*) by which we revere and cultivate those whom we recognize as preceding us in age or wisdom or honor or in any form of worthiness" (*Inv. rhet.* 2.66). The value accorded to viewing varied by social status, though unfortunately documentation is scant on the practices and interpretations of disenfranchised groups such as plebeians, slaves, women, and foreigners (Kellum 1999; Frederick 2002; Clarke 2003). Believing the very act of spectatorship placed the observer in the role of evaluator, witness and *arbiter*, the Romans considered this a privilege for, and between, the elite (Tac. *Ann.* 3.16; Barton 2002: 221). Viewers of lesser standing could gaze admiringly at their betters, but they lacked the status to evaluate them. Conversely, the upper classes did not deign to turn their glance downward to look at unworthy subjects. Suetonius provides an amusing anecdote from the Augustan Age. An actor was expelled from the city for pointing at a member of the audience who was hissing at him. Though the gesture may have been obscene, Suetonius explained that the punishment was justified because the actor had, inappropriately, "turned all eyes upon a spectator" (*Aug.* 45). The inappropriateness of the audience as the object of valued viewing is underscored by the paucity of crowd depictions in ancient art until the late Empire (Lim 1999).

The desire to be seen impacted actions of every sort, from the remarkable to the quotidian. Each morning a senator drew visual attention not only with his billowing white toga, but also with his cortege of clients moving at a slow, viewable pace from his house to the Forum. Elite residents in Roman towns may have purposely selected circuitous routes in order to extend the time and spaces in which they could be seen (Laurence 1996: 127–9). In crowded urban spaces, senatorial speakers spread their arms to make larger visual targets and placed themselves as visual termini, preferably in prominent positions which also maximized their vistas outward. As a result, speaking heights literalized rank; the more important the individual, the more visible and higher the position he could occupy. Magistrates spoke from the elevated rostra during assemblies while non-magistrates could do so only if invited. Exploitation of the word *gradus* (step) to describe rank underscores the importance of viewing heights (Corbeill 2002: 200). Republican worthies demonstrated the principle of "nothing to hide" by selecting prominent hilltop sites for their houses; Cicero boasted about his residence on the Palatine, "My house, gentlemen, stands full in view of well-nigh the whole city" (*Dom.* 100). Other important individuals drew attention by riding in carriages such as the *pilentum*, which elevated them above the teaming crowds clogging Rome's streets. The right to such a highly visible position was awarded as a special honor. For example, the state acknowledged the generosity of Rome's matrons who donated their jewelry during a conflict by conferring upon them the right to drive to sacred festivals and games in a carriage, and on holy days and work days in a two-wheeled cart (Liv. 5.25). The elevated position of individuals in carts and carriages became even more notable at the end of the Republic when Julius Caesar prohibited wheeled traffic in Rome during daylight hours. Excepted from this ban were vehicles for priests and other religious dignitaries, and those used in festival processions (*CIL* 1.2 593, 2.56–67). In the visually stacked hierarchy of power, the gods naturally occupied the highest positions. Vitruvius told architects to locate altars, "on a lower level than are the statues in the temples, so that those who are praying and sacrificing may look upwards towards the divinity" (*De arch.* 4.9) (Figure 2.2).

Inanimate objects were also subject to the same hierarchical viewing notions. At Rome a second population of statues crowded every public space (Stewart 2003: 118). By their very existence these carved depictions celebrated the importance of the individuals represented. The subjects' stature was further emphasized by over life-size scale and, especially, by placement atop tall pedestals

Figure 2.2 A group of young men holding torches look up reverently at a statue of Diana in a fresco panel from Ostia, early third century CE, now in the Vatican. Photograph: Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Rome 31.

or podia (Plin. *HN* 34.11; Højte 2005). Statius in the first century CE described the towering equestrian statue of Domitian which literally and figuratively looked down on the statue of Julius Caesar (*Silv.* 1.1.85–90). Buildings, too, reflected the culturally imposed visual hierarchy. Major structures and sites in Rome were humanized as superior viewers. Horace described the Roman Forum itself as looking benevolently at the good man (Hor. *Epist.* 1.16.57), and the Curia modulated human behavior by operating as a benevolent spectator (Cic. *Flac.* 57). Temples rose upon tall podia, with important sculptural programs, elaborate ornamentation, and inscriptions located high up on entablatures readily seen by the gods, even if not always in focus for human spectators. Similarly, expensive details such as bronze column capitals appeared far above the plebeian eye level focused on the streetscape. Vitruvius recommended temples be sited, "so . . . that the greatest possible part within the walls of the city may be visible" implying a viewing not only from the buildings, but by them (*De arch.* 4.5.2; Favro 1999). Significantly, totalizing overviews of the great capital herself were restricted to omnipotent divine viewers. While numerous representations of cities appear in ancient art, none have been preserved of Rome. The city was too large, too important, and too powerful be grasped by human eyes (Edwards 1998). In the second century, Aelius Aristides wrote of the capital:

> About her not only is it impossible to speak properly, but it is impossible even to see her properly. In truth it requires some all-seeing Argos— rather, the all-seeing god who dwells in the city. For beholding so many hills

> occupied by buildings, or on plains so many meadows completely urbanized, or so much land brought under the name of one city, who could survey her accurately? And from what point of observation?[3]

A number of festivals engaged large segments of Rome, yet in general processions did not overtly encourage human participants or spectators to look at the entire cityscape. The human viewing of urban panoramas was allowable at other cities, not Rome. For example, in 17 BCE several days of celebration marked an important temporal period, the *saeculum*, generally calculated to be the longest time a person could live (around a century in length). In the chorals written for the event, Horace mentioned the seven hills of the city and told of the Sun god looking down on Rome (*Carm. saec.* 9–12). On June 6 as part of the festivities twenty-seven youths and twenty-seven maidens paraded atop the high Palatine Hill before singing the *Carmen Saeculares.* They and the spectators had a broad view of the city in the morning light, yet neither the song nor the rituals seem to have specifically engaged the sprawling urban panorama.

Rome's residents feasted their eyes on the animated activities of festival parades at the mundane street level. Most ancient pictorial representations of festivals emphasized the ritual action, minimizing or omitting the environments in which they occurred. Generally, artistic representations of festivals depicted only structures which specifically related to the ritual, as was the case with scenes of triumphal parades passing through commemorative arches or with sacrifices before specific temples. As the subject of visual attention, festival processions and other events possessed a higher status in the eye of the beholder than their immediate physical surroundings. After all, winding their way through the dense urban fabric, parades passed numerous shops, apartment buildings, workshops, and other features unworthy of the ritual gaze (Kellum 1999; Ellis 2004). Parade programmers facilitated mass viewing by directing processions through large spectator buildings with permanent seating (Liv. *Epon.* 39.5; Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 3.68). With steeply pitched seats such venues visually isolated observers from the rest of the city, focusing attention on the parade located at ground level. Meant to be seen, these spectator environments were represented in depictions of ritual processions (Figure 2.3).

Shared notions about viewing affected all participants in Roman festival processions. Important individuals and statues frequently rode in wheeled carts, thus occupying status-associated elevated positions. The spectators at ground level literally looked up to these figures. Good views of the parade must have been a challenge in Rome with a population of approximately a million residents by the late Republic. Ancient sources describe the thoroughfares as teeming with activity in general; on festival days the situation was exacerbated (Juv. 3.232–67; Suet. *Iul.* 39). Residents jostled for position along narrow streets, many without sidewalks. Josephus recorded that for the triumph of Vespasian and Titus, "every body went out so far as to gain only a station where they might stand, and left only such a passage as was necessary for those that were to be seen to go along it" (*BJ.* 7.3). The design of many buildings addressed

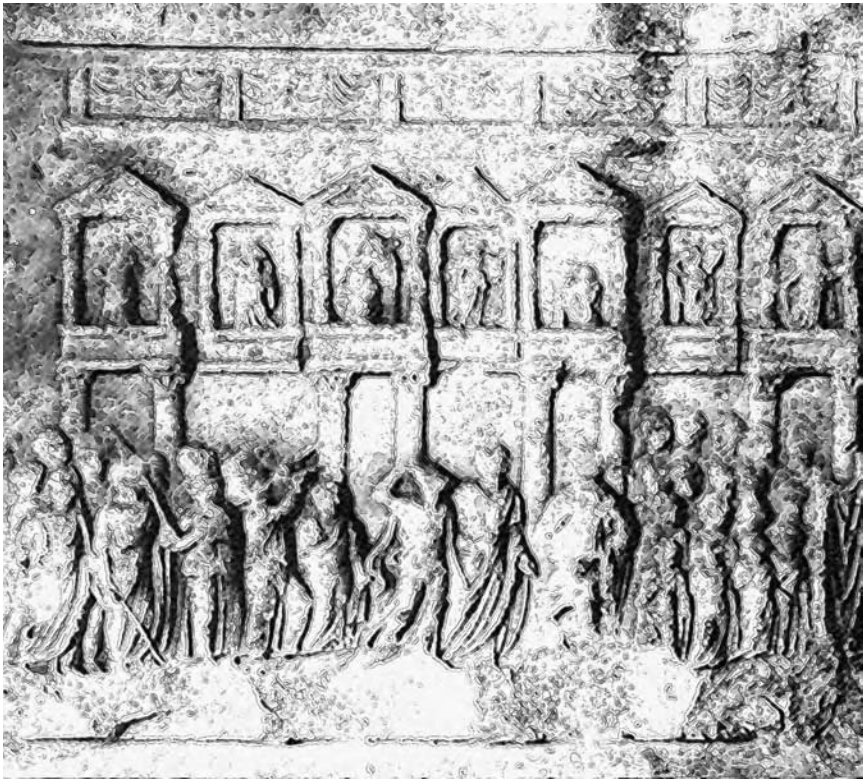

Figure 2.3 A togate figure moves along with musicians, dancers, and a chorus in front of the *scaenae frons* of a theater in a lost relief from Castel S. Elia, first or second century CE. Photograph: Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Rome 60.1169.

the requirements of spectators who spent numerous days watching or participating in communal rituals. Temple podia served as viewing platforms, porticos fronting public buildings and around temples, and fluttering awnings sheltered observers from the hot sun (Plin. *HN* 19.23); upper galleries in theaters and basilicas offered good overviews of events. Hundreds gaped at processions from the windows, balconies, and roofs of apartment houses (*insulae*) and other structures lining the route, as well as from temporary scaffolds specifically erected for the purpose.[4] Propertius in the Augustan age told of watching a triumphal parade through an upper window while in the arms of his paramour:

> Before my days run to a close
> I may see chariots returning,
> Axles groaning with plunder
> And hear the cheers of the crowd

As the horses pick through the throng
And I will watch the procession.
Cynthia's lap for a pillow
And read out the list of cities seized,
Gaze at the javelins
Of the vanquished cavalry,
The bows of the trousered barbarians,
And their captured chieftains
Sitting close by their stacked weapons,
All led by Caesar.
(Prop. 3.4.15–18)

Propertius heard, but did not describe (or presumably see) the cheering crowd; he read the written names of conquered territories carried aloft and saw the tall javelins of the soldiers, as well as the captured chieftains held aloft along with booty to be easily seen by the crowds (*Hercules on Oeta* 110; Ov. *Pont.* 3.4.95–6; Abaecherli 1935–6: 1–20). Above all, his attention centered on the triumphator who passed by atop his chariot (see Plin. *Pan.* 22.2.3). Propertius in effect described the upper horizontal swath of the parade as it moved by the window (Figure 2.4). The richness and significance of objects seen demonstrates the care event organizers took to address a sizeable audience located above street level; at the same time this evidence further underscores the vertical visual hierarchy imposed by the Romans.

In certain instances, the physical realities of Rome's environments compelled a reversal of viewing hierarchies. In spectator buildings, important citizens sitting approximately at stage level had the best views, but occupied the lowest seats (Campbell 2003: 67, 75–6). Rome's poorer and less valued residents occupied the higher, distant seats where they had totalizing vistas down on their superiors and ritual processions. Similarly, in urban housing the more affluent occupied the lower floors of Rome's apartment buildings while the poor resided in walk-up garrets from which they looked down on the parades in the streets below. Possible rationalizations for these situations may have existed in antiquity. The vistas of inferior viewers from their distant positions were blurred by distance and pollution, emphasizing their social and physical remoteness from the elite. Furthermore, in performative crowd settings the concentrated, simultaneous viewing by the collective elevated the entire procession metaphorically if not in fact. Nevertheless, such situations challenged Roman culturally constituted viewing conventions. When a plague ravaged Rome, an oracle explained that it was because men were "looking down on the gods." After much consternation, the origin of this affront was identified. A boy watching a procession out of his upper window had looked down upon improperly covered sacred objects carried aloft in a tray; in response the Senate ordered that the windows along the processional route be screened to prevent future reprisals from the gods (Macrob. *Sat.* 1.6.15).

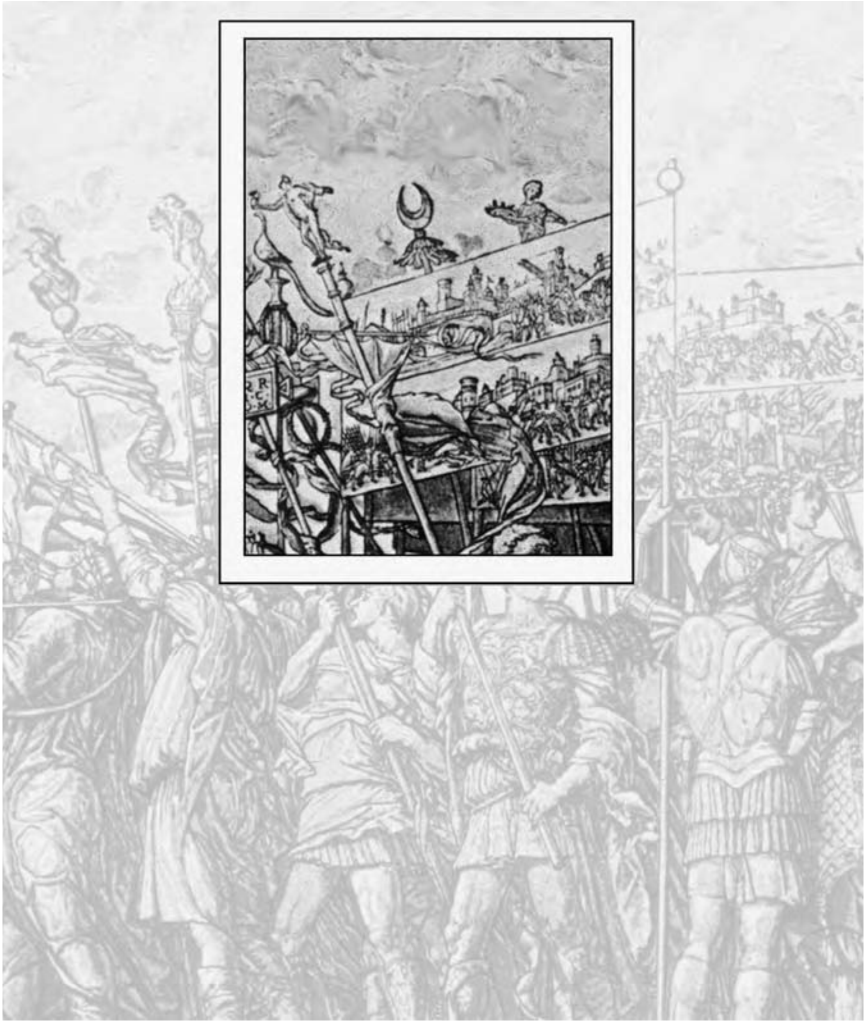

Figure 2.4 Abstracted recreation showing the segment of a triumphal parade seen by Propertius through a window. Image by author after Andrea Mantegna's *Triumph of Caesar*, 1599.

Spectatorship is bi-directional. The seen also see. The reflexive viewshed of the most important parade participants, including priests, magistrates, and divine effigies, was privileged. Those at the head of parades were spied first by the crowd; conversely, they had less obstructed vistas of the city before them. Plutarch noted that to keep the route of festival processions open, servitors and lictors "drove back all who crowded into or ran across the main avenue" (Plut. *Vit. Aem.* 32.2). While post-antique processions often cordoned off entire parade routes, in antiquity the officers and servants may have cleared only the immediate area in front of the progressing parade much as slaves and servants opened the way for important citizens and their corteges moving through Rome (Juv. 3.239–40). If this were the case, a receding wall of spectators would have prevented parade leaders from having fully unobstructed views down urban streets, yet their vistas would have been broader than those of the parade participants who followed.

The triumphal parade was led in the Republic by the magistrates and senators, whose coming was announced by trumpeters (App. *Pun.* 66). Others who occupied positions in the midst of the procession were frequently elevated to make them more visible and to allow them to view the city and its wonders. In the triumph, the victorious general followed after the booty, musicians, and captives occupying an elevated stratum atop a chariot. Ovid underscored his elevated position in relation to the crowds, writing, “High above them in the car of victory, thou wilt ride, O Caesar” (*Tr.* 4.2.47). The *triumphator* and other procession participants carried on high or riding in wheeled vehicles were frequently at eye-level with urban statues of notables. A tilt of the head upward and their eyes beheld the rich ornament, pedimental sculptures, and inscriptions decorating the upper reaches of public monuments far out of view for earth-bound observers. In the Republic, when temple podia averaged approximately 3 meters in height, the elevated observers could look directly at cult statues seen through open temple doors, a visual exchange that declined as podia increased in height in the Imperial period (Plut. *Vit. Aem.* 32.2).

Lifted above the fray, important parade participants also could, with a simple turn of the head, look frontally at significant buildings as they passed, a viewing angle associated with respect. Vitruvius specifically recommended that temples along “the sides of public roads should be arranged so that the passers-by can have a view of them and make their reverence in full view” (*De arch.* 4.5.1). Reliefs from the Tomb of the Haterii belonging to an early Imperial building contractor depict various public structures on which the deceased worked (Castagnoli 1941) (Figure 2.5). Presumably his funeral cortege passed by each to allow him to take an inventory of his life’s work. Held aloft in a *lectica funebres* he could look frontally at the buildings without perspectival distortion, precisely the same view shown in the reliefs. When possible, procession dignitaries avoided demeaning angled vistas downward; only by chance, or mistake, did they glance down at the general populace whose crowded mass hid from view mundane street-front shops and building podia.

In most instances, less exalted parade participants at ground level had limited viewing options. Often they had little time to look at their surroundings, being too busy dancing, playing instruments, chanting, or performing in other ways. At the lively Lupercalia the youths wildly flailed at female spectators with lashes as they ran through the city (Plut. *Vit. Caes.* 61). The frenzied activity naturally precluded any sustained visual interaction with the urban fabric, but was appropriate for young men who had not yet earned the right to a more dignified, omniscient level of viewing. In general, parade participants on foot had their lateral views blocked by the flanking crowds. They saw the towering *insulae* and facades of public buildings at raked angles; this perspective accentuated the buildings' overall height, but compromised the legibility of sculptures, inscriptions, and spectators. Vistas opened out as the parades passed through larger public spaces. For example, as a procession moved through spectator buildings, the participants passed through vaulted access tunnels before bursting forth into the large open space. There they feasted their eyes on numerous sculptures and various eye-catching features, including the vibrant audience. Seen by parade participants from the ground upward, the spectators formed a teeming mass. Across the broad swath of seating, class divisions were manifest in the differentiations of color and garments. The display visually represented Roman society, reinforcing the power of ancient festivals to articulate and reaffirm the goals and aspirations of the collective. Walking or riding across the floor of the Circus Maximus at a leisurely pace, the elevated important parade participants clearly saw the patricians in the lower seats, monuments along the *spina*, and the commemorative arch on the east along their path; the less significant seated masses above and behind appeared as a blur (Figure 2.6). The impressive image must have especially affected participants who had long been away from Rome or never seen the capital, including soldiers and captives in the Roman triumphal parades (Favro 1994).

Figure 2.5 Early Imperial relief presenting significant buildings in Rome as if each viewed frontally from the Tomb of Haterii. Photograph by author.

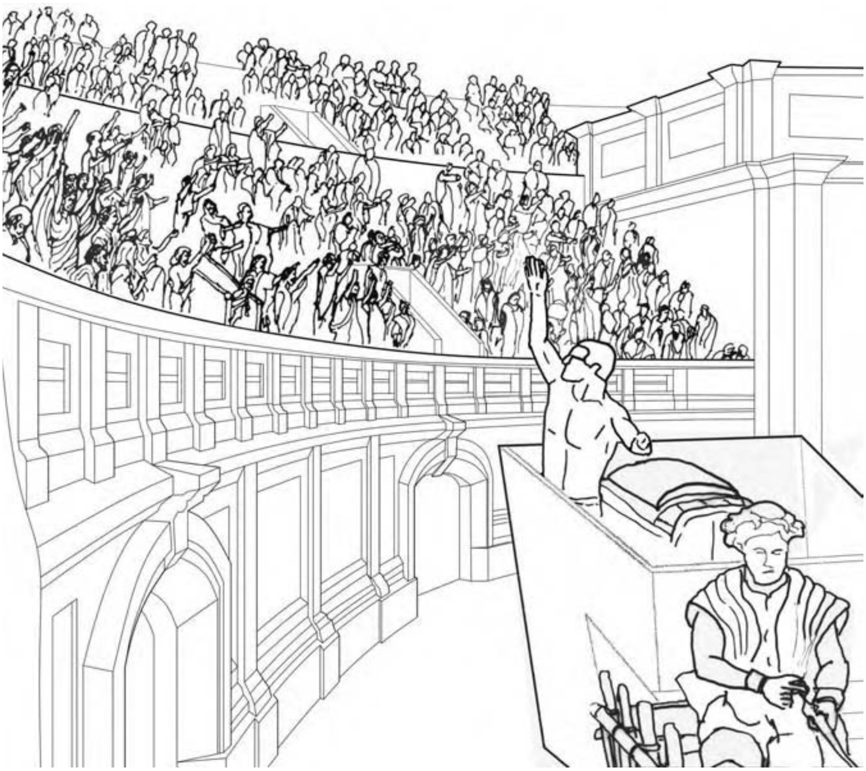

Figure 2.6 Recreation of the interaction between spectacle participant in a parade float and the audience in bleachers; inspired by the film *Gladiator*. Image by Brendan Beachler.

Moving with the procession

Passive, static viewing dominates much of modern society. In contrast, Roman spectatorship was often highly interactive. Along the routes of festival processions participants and spectators exchanged words and gestures, threw flowers and coins, and interrelated in numerous other ways including verbal exchanges (Ov. *Tr.* 4.2). The Romans valued animated, kinetic spectatorship. Upper-class citizens honed this skill through rhetorical mnemonic training which associated concepts with elements encountered along a path through an imagined physical environment (the so-called "Roman house of memory"). When passing through a city, they likewise "read" the individual elements as important components in meaningful narratives (Favro 1993). Ancient wall paintings further affirm the Roman preoccupation with viewing in motion. Rather than employ a singular, static one-point perspective as an organizing device, these works portrayed several different viewing angles within the same immersive painted room or even within the same image, implying the richness of vistas seen in kinetic succession (Grau 2003: 25–33). Thus a filmic rather than static pictorial analysis is more appropriate for the evaluation of the exchange between parades and the city. The reliefs showing the dedication ceremony of the Augustan Ara Pacis depict participants walking westward. This artistic device underscored the linear importance of the parade as a totality and reflected the stately movement involved in this particular event; in addition, long after the initial festival, the directional movement of the carved figures encouraged observers to follow their lead and move from the Via Lata toward an obelisk honoring the conquest of Egypt that formed part of the Augustan ensemble in the northern Campus Martius (Favro 1993: 262). While an event such as the triumph could be watched from one location, others required the audience to move along with the procession, as was the case with funeral rites (Polyb. 53–4). Some processions drew larger audiences at specific points where they stopped to perform a ritual or dance (Liv. *Epon.* 1.20; Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 2.70; Scullard 1981: 86).

Every component of a festival procession gained, or lost, significance depending upon its placement in the processional sequence. Cicero described a festival parade (probably the *Ludi Apollinares*) at which the crowd withheld its applause for Victory because of her undesirable neighbor (*malum vicinum*), an adjacent statue of the dictator Caesar (*Cic. Att.* 13.44). When Augustus reordered the revered triumphal parade in 29 BCE, all Romans took note. Dio Cassius wrote:

> He [Augustus] did everything in the customary manner, except that he permitted his fellow-consul and the other magistrates, contrary to precedent, to follow him along with the senators who had participated in the victory; for it was usual for such officials to march in advance and for only the senators to follow.
>
> (51.21)

The reprogramming was calculated and rife with meaning: as the most powerful man in Rome, Augustus was to be followed in all things.

The sequence in which festival parades encountered urban elements also was significant. Roman festival organizers programmed parades to include particular structures and other urban features whose imagery and meaning related to the particular events. When writing his tome on the Latin language, Varro consulted a handbook outlining the order for visiting the twenty-seven Sacraria Argeorum (*Ling.* 5.45–54; 7.44; Harmon 1978: 1446–60). The route followed the numbering of Rome's four tribal regions, beginning in Region I, the Subura, located in the south and then moving counterclockwise through the city (Figure 2.1). The identified locations of the *sacraria* occupied the hilltops of each region, reaffirming the protected locations of early tribal settlements. In May, the purification festival culminated with a procession down to the Pons Sublicius where the Vestal virgins tossed dolls made from rush into the raging Tiber River. As a totality, the interrelated events in March and

May recalled Rome's early history, kinetically stitching together the exalted upper levels of the entire city and underscoring the importance of the Tiber in Rome's foundation.

Building patrons responded to the visual potency and associations of well-traveled processional routes. The Roman triumphal parade adhered to a traditional, if variable, path beginning in the Campus Martius moving south, turning to pass before the enormous crowds in the Circus Maximus, then looping northward around the Palatine before parading through the Forum and ascending to the Temple of Jupiter Optimus Maximus on the Capitoline (Figure 2.1). In the Republic, triumphators commemorated their military achievements by expending hard-won booty on enduring memorials along the venerated triumphal route. Other ambitious Roman patrons likewise sought maximum exposure and association with military success by locating structures on this parade course or within its viewshed. In the period between the First and Third Punic Wars, eighteen of the thirty temples erected in Rome were located along the path of the triumph (Favro 1994).

Roman kinetic viewing was shaped by cultural preconceptions about orientation and sequencing. In antiquity, rituals frequently moved counterclockwise and topographic descriptions, such as lists of Rome's hills, were often similarly ordered (Castagnoli 1964: 177; Bonfante Warren 1970: 54). Tacitus described Romulus plowing a furrow to define the area of early Rome by moving in a counterclockwise movement from the Forum Boarium to the Forum Romanum (Tac. *Ann.* 13.24). This rotational direction probably derived from solar orientation and timekeeping. In the northern hemisphere, sundials face south, causing the shadow cast by the gnomon to move in a deosil, or clockwise, motion. Rotational movement in the opposite direction could be considered outside of time and thus integrated with the cosmos, an appropriate association for ritual festivals (Davies 2000: 83–4). Roman races in the circus ran counterclockwise, possibly to reinforce the cosmological and solar meaning of the events, though practical motivations also were at play; racers preferred to keep their right, sword-wielding hand on the outside where there was the greatest freedom of movement. Participants in funeral processions similarly moved in a counterclockwise motion around the sacred burial spot in order to commit the deceased to his final resting place outside of time. The helical narratives carved on Trajan's Column and other monuments compelled viewers to retrace the counterclockwise movement of sacred processions.

The progression of Roman festivals involved time as well as space. The velocity of movement and the complexity of ceremonial activities naturally impacted the viewing experience of the city and its spaces. The speed varied widely, from the frenzied runners at the Lupercalia to the stately movement of the consuls who paraded up to the Capitoline Hill during the *processus consularis* which opened the consular year. Notably, the heaviness of litters and floats enforced a sedate pace upon many Roman ritual parades, a characteristic revealed by Cicero's admonition not to move with the slowness of a float or tray (*ferculum*) used in parades (*Off.* 1.36); Ovid's description of the goddess Venus nodding to him with approval may reflect the slow, swaying movement of her heavy sculpture carried in a procession atop a litter (*Am.* 3.2.58). The temporal duration of Roman processions could stretch to cover several days, as with the three parades on different days for the triumph of L. Aemilius Paulus (Plut. *Vit. Aem.* 32). In addition, the processions were merely one component in a series of happenings associated with a specific event. Many festivals included sacrifices, rituals, plays, musical performances, games, and meals as well as a parade. The sequencing, duration, and number of interrelated activities naturally impacted the perception of festival processions. On a broader scale, the placement of events in the larger time frame of the annual calendar also imparted meaning through the juxtaposition of various interrelated, or opposing, festivals in an expansive spatio-temporal context (Favro 1993: 244–7).

Sensing the festival

Festivals are not just seen, they are experienced. In addition to visually striking tableaus, ancient participants and audiences remembered the feel of sweat pouring down their necks on hot days; the hardness of wooden benches; the mood of the crowd; the discordant sounds of music, shouting spectators, and braying animals; and the wafting smells of unwashed bodies and decaying garlands, among many other sensorial phenomena. Especially important, though often overlooked, was the spatial choreography of parades. While space is a hot topic in modern and post-modern urban research, far less attention has centered on the subject in relation to ancient Rome.[5] After all, Roman spatial ideas are difficult to document. The majority of both ancient and modern references relating to the subject discuss individual buildings; urban space is rarely explicitly described, reflecting both the difficulties of articulating the intangible and a disinterest in expressing the obvious. Modern scholars face numerous challenges when attempting urban spatial analyses of Rome. Data for any one period is extremely fragmentary. Furthermore, as the capital, Rome always was unique and thus cannot be readily understood through the examination of other urban comparanda such as Pompei or well preserved provincial cities (MacDonald 1982; Laurence 1996). As a result, processional spatial experiences in ancient Rome can only be considered provisionally.

All cities offer the peripatetic observer variation in spatial experiences. At the great metropolis of Rome, however, these must have been extreme. The city was as remarkable for its narrow byways and lack of broad boulevards as for its impressive monuments and grand public spaces, though Rome's status as capital precluded any disparaging remarks (Ramage 1983). Parades took place in the open air, only briefly passing through roofed structures such as arches, gateways, or covered streets. Sunlight illuminated large spaces as processions in ancient Rome passed along the broader streets and through open public plazas where observers could gaze beyond the action to admire marble monuments sparkling in the sun. As parades entered narrow streets, deep shadows emphasized changing spatial relationships. Processions moved through constricted canyons of space defined by tall multi-story apartment structures, only to burst forth into broad public areas such as the fora or unroofed spectator buildings. The link with the sky was not simply a practical result of staging in an urban environment; it also reaffirmed a direct connection to the gods and underscored the ritual basis of the event. The religious potency associated with a connection to the heavens is engagingly represented by the story of the god Terminus. When his shrine in Rome was incorporated into a new temple he insisted a hole be cut in the roof to maintain unobstructed contact with the sky above (Festus 505L; Ov. *Fast.* 2.671–2). The physical, visual, and psychological tightness of most streets in Rome, as well as their shadowy ambience, compelled viewers to look upward toward both the important figures and objects in parades, and beyond toward the divine, light-filled realm above.

The reactions of individual participants to the spaces of Rome varied tremendously, ranging from the comfort and familiarity felt by a native of the great capital city, to the shock and awe experienced by a captive from distant Germania accustomed to small scale tribal environments (Ov. *Tri.* 4.2). Perception of the physical urban surroundings was further affected by the great mass of human occupants. Rome was crowded on a daily basis; during festivals thousands more flocked to the city, creating a press of humanity that significantly impacted the perception of space (Lechner 1991). In particular, the proximity of so many people compromised urban viewing and mobility as thieves, sexual predators, and ambitious social climbers diverted attention from processional events.

Sounds further modulated spatial experiences (Brilliant 1999: 222–3). Roman festivals were noisy events. Plutarch records that heralds first passed through the city bidding people to stop work and get prepared for the festivities (*Vit. Num.* 14). The parade followed filled with music, chanting, clapping, various animal noises, the stomping of marching feet, singing, and many other sounds. The noise permeated the city, filtering through porticos, open windows, and thin wattle walls. Athenaeus gives a lively account of the sounds at the Parilia celebrations for Rome's birthday in Rome which included the shrill music of fifes, the clash of cymbals, and the beating of drums, melded singing voices, and an overall cacophony (Ath. 7.361). Changing environments of course modulated sounds. In the tightly configured streets flanked by hard stone and brick buildings noises reverberated loudly. In more broad public areas, the sounds became more diffused, allowing the audience to differentiate between various aural segments of the event. Such configurations contextualized the sounds, adding depth to the feeling of space. In spectator buildings, crowd noises competed with those of the parade performers, both echoing and intensifying the feeling of containment.

Smells also localized and focused the space of festival parades. Like sounds, odors helped to situate the spectator in relation to specific objects or actions within the parade, as well as to specific sites in the city. Festival events had a full range of aromas, from the pungent burning of incense to the sweet scent of scattered rose petals, the stench of animal excrement to the savory smells of public meals (Classen 1994). Hopefully, future research on Roman aural and olfactory responses will further elucidate their impact on the interpretation of ancient space.

The Megalensia

Complex cultural factors affected the Roman interpretation of seeing, moving, and sensing in relation to festival processions. Each event, of course, was unique, eliciting specific reactions and interpretations from participants and spectators, and drawing upon specific associations with urban features at Rome. A case study can help clarify how commonly held attitudes about viewing, moving, and sensing influenced a particular festival parade. Each April processions energized the Megalensia festival honoring Magna Mater. The cult to the mother goddess, also known as Magna Deum or Cybele, originated in the East. In the late third century BCE, the Romans responded to oracular sources, including the Sibylline Books, which advised "the mother" be brought to Rome (Roller 1999: 266–8). With great ceremony, a statue of the goddess was transported to Italy from Asia Minor in 204 BCE.[6] Acknowledging Magna Mater's link with mountains and fertility, the goddess was at first placed in a temple to Victory atop the Palatine. Construction began almost immediately on a new temple nearby. With castrated priests, Eastern music, and frenzied dancing, the cult of the Great Mother always retained a tinge of foreignness for the Romans (Roller 1999: 293–4). Nevertheless, the cult was central to Roman life and drew upon important mythical and historical associations (Salzman 1982). In particular, the Romans associated Magna Mater with their Trojan ancestor Aeneas, and honored her as protector of the city wearing a mural crown (Roller 1999: 263–327). Her new temple stood within Rome's sacred boundary (the *poemerium*) where foreign gods were forbidden, and was adjacent to both the hut associated with Rome's founder Romulus and the Lupercal where he had been suckled as an infant. The celebrations initiated at the temple's dedication on April 11, 191 BCE became the basis for the Megalensia festival and associated games, the Ludi Megalenses or Megalesia (Ov. *Fast.* 4.326). The early date in April may have been favored by patricians who sought to precede celebrations a few days later, honoring Magna Mater's daughter Ceres who favored the plebeian class (Scullard 1981: 97–100). By the end of the Republic, the event ran six days and included *ludi scaenici* (stage games) held in front of the temple on the third day of the festival and *ludi circensis* on the final day (April 10), as well as theatrical performances (Goldberg 1998). The cult's popularity is affirmed by repeated aggrandizements to both the temple and the open space in front used for performances (Pensabene 1988, 1996) (Figures 2.7 and 2.8).

Unfortunately the exact sequencing, timing, number, and routes of parades associated with the Megalensia are not clearly described in ancient sources. There were at least two distinct processions. In one, the cult statue was carried through the city, culminating at the great Mother's Palatine temple as part of

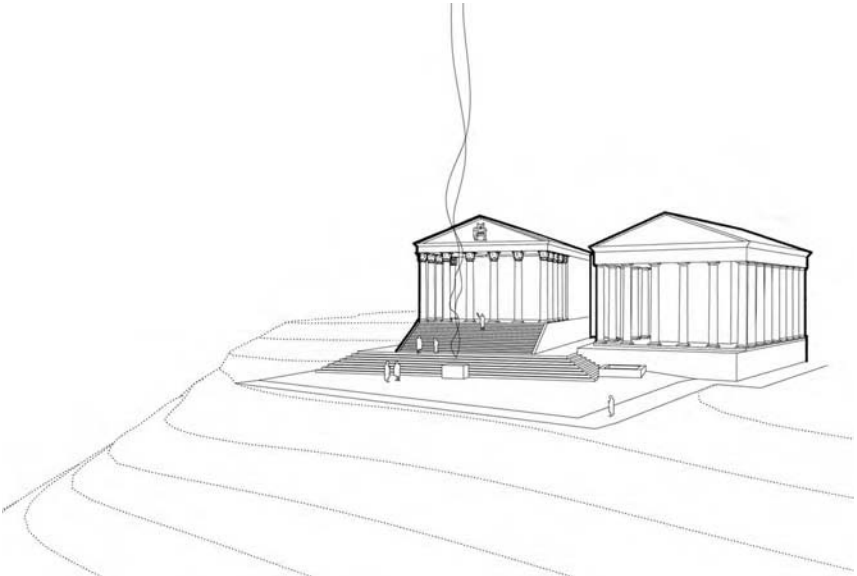

Figure 2.7 Reconstruction of the Temple of Magna Mater in Rome during the Republican period showing the Temple of Victory to the right and a basin associated with the cult. The audience at the *ludi scaenici* occupied the temple's stairs and temporary bleachers; the Theater of Cassius was planned for the slopes below. Drawing by Tom Beresford and Brendan Beachler.

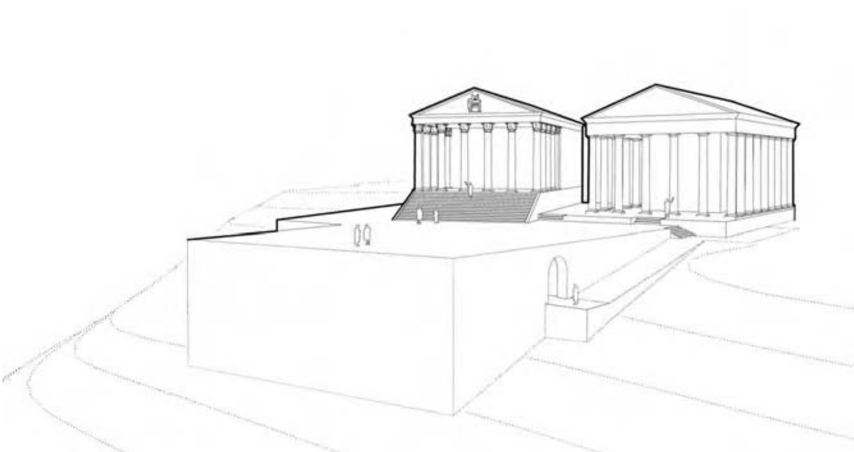

Figure 2.8 Reconstruction of the Temple of Magna Mater in Rome during the Imperial period when the plaza had been extended over an artificial terrace with a vaulted tunnel for the Clivus Victoria. Image by Tom Beresford and Brendan Beachler.

Figure 2.9 Imperial relief showing a procession with the enthroned Magna Mater carried on a *ferculum* accompanied by musicians; sacrophagus at San Lorenzo fuori le Mure, Rome. Photo by author.

the opening theatrical festivities on April 4, in effect serving as a *pompa scaenici* (Ov. *Fast.* 4.185–6; Hanson 1959: 81–2; Summers 1996: 341–4). The highlight of the procession was a statue of the enthroned goddess with lions, carried by four men atop a wooden litter, accompanied by the sound of cymbals, flutes, and drums (Abaecherli 1935–6: 3) (Figure 2.9). Dressed in effeminate clothing, Magna Mater's castrated priests, the *galli*, sang Greek hymns and collected coins thrown by spectators; leaping dancers with knives gestured wildly emulating conflict; the armed priests (*curetes*) marched with great solemnity, their helmet crests trembling with each step (Ov. *Fast.* 4.179–392; Lucr. 2.600–60). The fervor of the event, as well as the mendicant actions and emasculation of the priests, underscored the sect's foreign origins. In reaction, the stern Romans of the Republic forbade male citizens from becoming *galli* or participating in cultic practices; Plutarch described worship of Magna Mater as, "a religion of women and eunuchs" (*Mor. Amat.* 13.756C). In the early Empire Augustus restricted the priesthood to freedmen (Summers 1996: 339; *CIL* 6.496).

The *pompa circensis* held on April 10 was similar in configuration to other processions preceding ritual games. Traditionally such parades began on the Capitoline and ended at the Circus Maximus; however, the association with the mother goddess implies a starting point atop the Palatine. Since the steps known as the Scalae Caci leading directly down the hill would have been too steep for the participants carrying floats and statues, the parade presumably descended along the Clivus Victoriae to the Velabrum and then moved counterclockwise around the Palatine toward the city center (Ov. *Fast.* 4.390–2; *Am.* 3.2.43–84). Along the way, the procession probably meandered to pass by other structures and statues honoring Magna Mater, including that represented on the early Imperial Tomb of the Haterii identified either as a tholos or an honorific entry to the Circus Maximus (Mart. 1.70–9–10; Castagnoli 1941).

Descriptions of the events for the Megalensia naturally emphasized the privileged view of the goddess. In the first century BCE, Cicero wrote: "I speak of those games which our ancestors ordered to be performed and celebrated on the Palatine Hill, in front of the temple, *in the very sight of the mighty Mother*, on the day of the Megalensia" (my emphasis; *Har. resp.* 12). The passage implies that a statue of the goddess was moved out to the temple porch so she could watch the theatrical performances in the open area below. The goddess' role as spectator was further emphasized by the pedimental sculpture. The so-called Ara Pietatis relief from the first century CE now immured into the Villa Medici shows a mural crown on a throne in the center of the pediment, as if the goddess had just stepped down from her seat (Figure 2.10). A large-scale togate figure stands to the right; though he looks away it is significant that his eye level is just below the throne, a viewing position that underscored simultaneously his obvious importance but also his human status (Roller 1999: 309–10). Integral to the Republican ritual was the washing of the divine effigy in the fountain basin by the steps of the temple; the statue received another bath on

Figure 2.10 Pediment of the Temple of Magna Mater highlighting the throne with mural crown and togate figure, from the "Ara Pietatis" Claudian relief. Image by Tom Beresford and author.

March 27 at the brook Almo south of Rome commemorating Magna Mater's original entry into Rome (Ov. *Fast.* 4.337–40; Arr. *Tact.* 33.4). The goddess then continued on her journey through the city carried on the shoulders of the faithful. Lucretius drew upon Greek poets to clarify her elevated position, noting that since the mother goddess cannot rest on the earth she must rightly be suspended in midair, a position which heightened her visibility (Lucr. 2.602–3; Summers 1996: 340–3).

Magna Mater occupied an ideal urban viewing location in Rome. Like Argos, the goddess simultaneously enjoyed multiple vistas. From the towering temple on the Palatine Hill, her divine scopic regime encompassed the southern part of the city below. Significantly, from this high point Magna Mater, as anthropomorphically represented by the temple, viewed the city she protected as well as herself in effigy parading through it. Atop the central spina of the Circus Maximus, a sculpted Magna Mater seated on a lion's back had a close-up view of the slowly proceeding *pompa circensis* and the subsequent honorific games (Tert. *De spec.* 8). Conversely, the statue glanced up the hill to the temple, gazing over the heads of upper-class citizens sitting in the lowest seats, who reverently looked up and back at her.[7]

Participants in most Roman processions included important citizens anxious to have their status enhanced by the gaze of Rome's residents. In contrast, the Romans put restrictions on who could participate in the Megalensia, largely in response to the exotic Eastern character of the event. Non-Romans, freedmen, and slaves composed the parade for the Megalensis, with the most overt displays by the castrated, gyrating *galli.* Dionysius of Halicarnassus in the late first century BCE wrote, "by a law and decree of the senate no native Roman walks in procession through the city arrayed in a parti-coloured robe, begging alms or escorted by flute-players, or worships the god with the Phrygian ceremonies" (*Ant. Rom* 2.19.3–5). The Roman citizens in the audience must have felt somewhat removed, and superior, to the slave and freedmen participants. Dressed in somber togas and simple tunics they literally and figuratively looked up to the statue of Magna Mater, but down on the non-citizen eunuchs and ecstatic participants in their flamboyant costumes.

Variations in speeds of action further shaped viewing of the Megalensia parade. The divine effigy of the mother goddess covered with multitudinous folds of heavy drapery could only be carried at a slow pace, in marked contrast with the exuberant dancers around her. In effect, Magna Mater offered herself for leisurely, respectful viewing, while the other whirling, brightly garbed parade participants remained an appropriate blur. Notably the cacophony of sounds associated with the event heightened the overall momentum, generating a rapturous whirl.

The privileging of the patrician view was made manifest at the *ludi scaenici* of the great goddess held in front of the Palatine temple (Figures 2.7 and 2.8). Cicero noted that Roman senators were first given "a place in front of the seats belonging to the people," while slaves were traditionally excluded from the event.[8] At these popular performances spectators formed, as Cicero describes, a "dense body in which they were sitting, chained as it were to the spectacle, and hindered by the crowd and narrow space" (Cic. *Har. resp.* 22). During the Republic, the plaza before the temple was roughly triangular, shaped by the right-angle turn in the Clivus Victoriae before it descended to the Velabrum. The open space was notably constricted (approximately 16 meters wide in front of the temple). The festival audience occupied the stairs of both the Temple of Magna Mater and the adjacent Temple of Victory, with additional space provided by temporary bleachers to complete the "*cavea*" described by Cicero.[9] The seated viewers had a clear view of the theatrical and other performances, as well as the procession which passed in front of the temple, paralleling the arrangement of spectators watching parades move through theaters and circuses. Magna Mater sat behind and above the audience, a position usually occupied in spectator buildings by the least important individuals. The location, however, was one specifically associated with divine architectural viewers. At several Republican religious complexes, including that honoring Hercules at Tivoli and Venus Victrix at Pompey's Theater in Rome, a temple perched atop curving stairs doubling as bleachers had an optimal view of the theatrical performances enacted below (Hanson 1959). In addition, the staging recalled that of forensic speeches in the Roman Forum with the presiding magistrate watching the proceedings while seated on a tribunal above and behind the jurors (Cic. *Vat.* 34).

After a fire decimated the Palatine in 111 BCE, the Temple of the Magna Mater area was extensively reworked. Over a series of renovations the plaza was raised, covering over the ritual basin; by the second century BCE the plaza extended approximately 30 meters out over an artificial terrace supported on vaults.[10] With this transformation the Clivus was routed into a vaulted tunnel under the plaza. Parades moving from the temple passed through the broad artificial terrace, down a steep ramp before disappearing briefly into the tunnel, a choreography that recalled the movement of other parades through the vaults of permanent theaters and circuses. The audience gathered on the plaza above could modulate the progress of the procession aurally by listening to the transformation as the boisterous sounds eerily reverberated inside the covered street before once more opening up and floating to the sky.

The events over the six days of the Megalensia evoked different responses. Cicero described the *ludi scaenici* theatrical performances watched by citizens as "*maxime casti, solemnes, religiosi*" ("chaste, solemn, and holy"; *Har. resp.* 12). In contrast, other authors, including Lucretius and Dionysius of Halicarnassus, characterized the kinetic parade of foreign, slave, and freedmen participants as raucous, foreign, and loud. Lucretius writing in the first century BCE gave a lively depiction of the human participants and viewers:

> The *Galli* come:
> And hollow cymbals, tight-skinned tambourines
> Resound around to bangings of their hands;
> The fierce horns threaten with a raucous bray;
> The tubed pipe excites their maddened minds

In Phrygian measures; they bear before them knives,
Wild emblems of their frenzy, which have power
The rabble's ingrate heads and impious hearts
To panic with terror of the goddess' might.

(Lucr.2.618–24)

Amid the swirl of action sat the image of Magna Mater whom he described as, "today . . . carried out, with solemn awe." The differentiation in responses reflects the complexity of Roman festival processions that varied according to the status associated with the object of the gaze. Significantly, the physical environment also played a role. The theatrical space in front of Magna Mater's temple provided a static setting for performances where activities and viewing were fixed and focused. As the parade passed from the contained theatrical environment it entered the multivalent, animated cityscape where innumerable objects and a lively panoply of viewers vied for attention.

Every aspect of religious festivals such as the Megalensia was subject to strict religious protocols. Cicero noted that the ritual was tainted "if a sacred dancer stops, or a flute-player has on a sudden ceased to play" (Cic. *Har. resp.* 23). Obviously, sounds were choreographed in detail. Drums, double flutes, cymbals, tambourine, and pan pipes projected a cacophony of sounds. Ovid noted, "the great goddess delights in a perpetual din," though she herself remained quiet, an act interpreted by some ancient authors as reflecting the mute universe (Ov. *Fast.* 4.179–210; Lucr. 625; Stewart 1970). Originating in Asia Minor, the instruments and the music established an exotic atmosphere along the pathway through the great capital city. Philodemus argued that the sounds of numerous different instruments fostered confusion, resulting in the ecstatic possession of the audience (Phld. *De musica*, 7.190fr.11B; Summers 1996: 347–8). The sound was condensed and intensified as the parade moved through the narrow canyons formed by high apartment buildings, becoming more diffused in broad public urban spaces, or when mingled with the crowd noise in theater spaces and other spectator buildings. Since the audience presumably was stationary, it was the parade participants, including the goddess, who reveled in the sound variations as they passed through various parts of the city.

The parade, like all processional events, did not present the same experience to all viewers. The sights, sounds, and smells varied along the processional route. The spectators at one stretch saw different dance moves and heard different sounds than those in another; those in one locale smelled the rose petals "falling like the snow upon the Mother and her companion-bands" (Lucr. 2.627), those at another were overcome by the heady incense carried by devotees of the goddess. People flanking the road were not passive viewers, but active participants, throwing flowers and coins to the goddess (Lucr. 2.626; Cic. *Leg.* 21.6, 40). City-dwellers watching from balconies and upper windows had a less heady, less immediate interaction, but a better overview of the event.

The progression of the parade exploited the *genius loci* of various places along the route. As appropriate for a deity dubbed protector of the city, the parade incorporated the Palatine area associated with Rome's earliest settlement and the city's eponymous founder Romulus. At the base of the hill, the parade route may have adhered to the well-trod route of the triumph, drawing strength as it passed by the various monuments donated by triumphators, looping around the Palatine and then moving through the Circus Maximus. Though the exact order of the parade elements is uncertain, presumably the statue of Magna Mater, like the triumphant general, did not lead the parade, but appeared as a climax in the animated sequence.

A first-century wall painting depicts the Megalensia parade (Figure 2.11). No urban features localize the event, but after all, ancient viewers readily recognized the well-known procession held in Rome each year. Depicting the physical setting would have been superfluous and diverted the collective gaze away from the ritual action. Interestingly, the painting is found at Pompeii located on a shop front on the major thoroughfare, the so-called Via dell'Abbondanza (IX, 7, 1; Carratelli 1999: 768–73; Clarke 2003: 87–94) (Figure 2.12). The representation in Pompeii of this important festival procession associated with the capital may advertise the owner's devotion to the cult or his involvement in producing some of the items used during the annual festivities. The images of the parade participants are not stock representations, further indicating a personal commission and connection with the subject. Since the locale has been

Figure 2.11 Wall painting depicting the end of the Megalensia parade from a shop front at Pompeii (IX, 7, 1). Archivio fotografico della Soprintendenza Archeologica di Pompei C502.

Figure 2.12 Shop front with painting of the Megalensia to the right, figure of Venus Pompeiana to the left, and four celestial deities above. Image by Tom Beresford, Brendan Beachler and author.

associated with felt production the owner may have made some of the garments worn in the parade, perhaps even those of the goddess (Clarke 2003: 94).

The image shows a moment at the end of the parade. Devotees gather around a priest and his assistants as they prepare to sacrifice before a statue of Magna Mater and an altar. Among the sixteen participants, six are women affirming the appeal of the cult to this group, and underscoring the inferior status accorded to parade participants. The goddess wears a mural crown and sits on a throne flanked by lions resting atop a *ferculum*. The carrying poles are clearly visible recalling the description by Ovid: "seated on the unmanly necks of her attendants, the goddess herself will be borne with howls through the streets in the city's midst" (*Fast.* 4.185–6). Even though resting on the ground, the large statue towers above everyone. A majority of the preserved figures in the painting tilt their heads back to look up at the goddess. When elevated atop the shoulders of the attendants, the eyes of Magna Mater would have been over 2.5 meters above ground level. Thus she had a superior viewing position in the festival procession, looking down on the parade spectators while participants at ground level had to look up to see her face. A curtain of green fabric with red stars forms a backdrop for the goddess, blocking out distracting background sights and focusing attention on her visage.

The viewing angles of the figures in the Pompeiian painting were carefully calculated. Depicted in a three-quarter view, the mother goddess looks horizontally across the shop opening toward a painted image of a famous statue of Venus Pompeiana represented at a slightly larger scale, an appropriate distinction reflecting Venus's status as ancestress of the Romans and her particularized role in this representation as patroness of the city where the painting is displayed. The visual exchange mimes that experienced by Magna Mater's statue during the parade. Held aloft, the goddess gazed into the eyes of other sculpted deities (and important Romans) atop pedestals and podia lining the streets. In a niche on the left side of the procession panel is a carved head of Dionysius, another god of eastern origins. His eye-level falls below that of the two goddesses, roughly matching that of two half-size musicians to his left (possibly children) recalling his music-filled festivals. On the highest register spanning the doorway to the shop are painted four celestial deities: Sol, Jupiter, Mercury, and Luna from left to right. The ordering reversed that of the fortunate days of the week, in effect miming the counterclockwise movement of the original procession in Rome (Clarke 2003: 88–9). The two gods on each side look over their shoulders towards their mirrored counterparts to balance the composition.

The painting encapsulates all the essential aspects of processional experience. The placement and sightlines of the figures in the Pompeiian painting overtly express Roman viewing hierarchies. The planetary gods above appropriately refuse to gaze down upon either the painted procession below organized and filled with humans, or upon the living observers on the street. In the middle register the sculpted effigies of Venus and Magna Mater stare at each other, oblivious to both painted and human spectators. Since a painting is static, movement was provided by Romans moving along the popular main street of Pompei, a reversal of the roles played by the audience and processants at the original parade. Nevertheless, the Pompeian pedestrians maintained the appropriate viewing relationships. They looked up to see the faces of the goddesses; lowering their gaze slightly they saw the faces of the painted parade participants. Observers were also roughly eye-to-eye with the bust of Dionysius, an appropriate viewing level for a deity associated with popular and populist ecstatic interaction and processions. The raucous sounds of the event echoed in viewers' memories as they recognized the various instruments brandished by the painted participants, including the tambourine held by Magna Mater (Clarke 2003: 91–2). Spying the altar on the right of the painting, they recalled the pungent aromas wafting from the herbal offerings associated with this cult (Ov. *Fast.* 4.367–72). The selection of this particular solemn moment is telling. The restraint of the ritual participants reinforces Roman viewing hierarchies. The image does not represent castrated *galli* twirling frenetically; even the ecstatic god Dionysius is shown in a sedate form. The acolytes approach the goddess who occupies a dominant position on the right, as if she has relocated to the front of the procession. In the fixity of the painted moment she looks back and up toward Venus Pompeiana, imparting the experiential memory and power of ritual processions and viewing hierarchies in Rome to another goddess and another city.

Notes

1 Several factors determined the selection of the Megalensis festival, which included processions and other events. Its institution in the early second century BCE is relatively well documented and described in ancient literature. The lengthy description by Lucretius probably reflects the actual event as it occurred during his lifetime in the first century BCE, making it one of the few detailed accounts of a festival from the Republican period; Lucr. 2.600–60; Summers 1996. Furthermore, unlike the Roman triumph this event has not been analyzed urbanistically; Favro 1994, Brilliant 1999.

2 Many Romans could not comprehend the call by Epicureans to avoid being seen. As part of his defamation of Piso, a staunch Epicurean who did not press for a triumph, Cicero put the following words in his mouth as an explicit criticism: "To hunt for applause, to be carried through the city, to wish to be gazed upon, are all mere trifles"; *Pis.* 60.

3 Aristid. *Or.* 26, 6–9; 61–2; see also Hor. *Carm. saec.* 9–12; Claud. *Cons. Hon. Cons. Stil.* 1.3.65–70. Davies argues that Trajan's Column and other monuments were used as platforms for viewing Rome in the Imperial period; Davies 2000, 136–71. While select dignitaries, and especially religious personages involved in augury may have had access to such elevated positions, the general public did not. For the superior position of Rome as a visual target see also Ov. *Fast.* 4.255–6; Edwards 1998.

4 On views from balconies see Vitr. *De arch.* 5.1.2; from bleachers see Plut. *Vit. Aem.* 32.2; from a window in Syracuse, Liv. *Epon.* 24.21.9; from bleachers, Plut. *Vit. C. Gracch.* 12.3. The painting *Spring* by Sir Lawrence Alma Tadema (1894) provides an evocative, if Victorian, rendition of a Roman processional audience crowding every urban surface in order to get a good view. A scene from a modern historical novel reverses the viewing, with an Imperial triumphator looking at his paramour who watches the parade from an upper window; Davis 1998, 169–71.

5 Contemporary spatial explorations in architecture and urban design draw heavily upon the writings of Heidegger and Lefebvre; Yoko 1996. Lefebvre famously psychoanalyzed Greek and Roman space, but largely from a twentieth-century perspective rather than a cultural-specific phenomenological context, 1991, 236–41. In particular, he associated horizontal (or lower) space with submission, and vertical space with power; 1991, 236. Other scholars approach the subject of urban space through the lens of sociology and cultural geography; Soja 1989. Seminal early works exploring Roman space through an architectural lense include Giedion 1941; Zevi 1948; and Drerup 1959.

6 Whether Magna Mater came from Pessinus or another city in Asia Minor is currently under question. Arriving at the port of Ostia she was placed on a barge for transport up the Tiber River. When it became stuck in the mud the Roman matron (or Vestal Virgin) Claudia Quinta tied her girdle to the vessel and alone pulled it up the Tiber to Rome escorted by matrons selected from the most distinguished patrician families. At the city Magna Mater was welcomed by a *vir optimus*, or best man, then triumphantly passed from hand to hand by patrician women who lined the route up to the Palatine; Ov. *Fast.* 4.291; Liv. *Epon.* 29.37.2; 36.36; Roller 1999, 265–72.

7 A coin commemorating Trajan's reworking of the Circus Maximus shows the view from the Palatine with the statue of Magna Mater near the center; unfortunately the image is too small to determine her viewing angle; *BMC* 853.

8 Cicero cites as exemplars Caius and Appius Claudius who ordered all slaves to leave the theatrical space. He contrasts their actions with those of Clodius who disrupted the *ludi scenici* of Magna Mater in 56 BCE with a gang of slaves, in effect reversing access to the event by turning it into a "Megalesia of slaves"; Cic. *Har. resp.* 24.

9 Cic. *Har. resp.* 26; Goldberg 1998, 6–8. Earlier in the second century BCE the censors Messala and Cassius had begun a permanent theater on the Palatine slope below the Temple of Magna Mater, but construction was halted by the Senate; Vell.Pat. 1.15.3; Campbell 2003, 67–76. At Pessinus in Asia Minor, the original home of the Magna Mater cult statue, an early Imperial temple boasted a similar configuration fronted by a cavea formed by straight stairs in front of the building and curving segments to the sides. No archaeological evidence definitively proves this building was associated with the cult of Cybele (Magna Mater); the excavators draw upon historical data to link it with the Imperial cult; Waelkens 1986, 68–72. However, the stair-cavea arrangement is unusual in the east and may have been chosen pointedly to recall the famous temple to Magna Mater at Rome which underwent major renovations not only in the Republic, but also under Augustus, and gained further importance with the cult's reinvigoration under Claudius as convincingly argued by Pensabene; 2004, 83–143.

10 Goldberg 1998, 5–7; Pensabene 1988, 1996. The plaza was expanded over the centuries, thus making it difficult to determine both its extent and the connection to the Clivus Victoriae east of the temple during the Republic. In the Severan period access was made by a small flight of stairs, an arrangement that would not easily accommodate a procession and thus may reflect changes in the parade's route and status during the Imperial period. Notably, the cult was opened to Roman citizens under Claudius, and subsequently incorporated additional eastern features, including the cult of Cybele's lover Attis and his festivals in March.

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3

Festival bridal entries in Renaissance Ferrara

Diane Yvonne Ghirardo

In July 1473, Duke Ercole I d'Este of Ferrara mounted his lavishly outfitted steed and, accompanied by close relatives and courtiers, rode to the nearby town of Consandoli to greet his bride, Eleonora d'Aragona, daughter of King Ferrante of Naples (*Venuta* 1586: cc. 18–19; Zambotti 1934: 89). The new duchess and her entourage then made a ceremonial entry into Ferrara, complete with triumphal carriages and temporary architecture erected along the processional route through the city. Starting at the southeastern bridge over the Po near the cathedral of St Giorgio, pergolas of leaves and branches formed vaults over the passageway to the city's longest, most important street, via Grande, at which point pergolas of wool cloth shaded the entrants from the hot July sun (*Diario* 1928: 89; Tuohy 1996: 265). On ducal orders, residents draped tapestries and carpets from their windows and balconies, and lined the streets with greenery. To round out the presentation, the duke commanded that public buildings along the route be given fresh coats of whitewash and the friezes be repainted (Tuohy 1996: 267).

Ceremonial entries for Este brides such as that of Eleonora d'Aragona were arranged at increasing cost, complexity and pomp from the late fifteenth through the sixteenth century.[1] Designed to present the city to the bride and more importantly, the bride to the city, these elaborate entries and the associated festivities constituted the only public celebrations of women in Renaissance cities such as Ferrara.[2] In the complicated gender relations of the time, the entries recognized the bride's parentage as much as the bride herself, and identified her as passing from the hands of her father to those of her spouse, where she would fulfill her primary role as mother of the male heir and his siblings—or so the groom's family hoped.[3] As such, the ceremonies occupied an important niche in the celebratory arrivals of important personages into Renaissance cities. Male dignitaries from cardinals to dukes and kings were accorded festive entries of various types, depending upon rank and station, but among women, only queens and brides received such elaborate celebrations. Like the activities engineered for honored male visitors, those for the women constituted compelling and carefully scripted public entertainment for the citizenry, at once engaging them as spectators of and as subordinates to the very different lives of nobles and rulers. Inasmuch as they were present, the citizens also became part of the spectacle. For the patron, the temporary architecture erected for these events was no less important than a public building, sculpture or painting and indeed, they commanded the resources of the city's most talented artists and artisans (Figure 3.1).

In this chapter, I examine the temporary architecture, from clothing to canopies to confectionary treats, constructed for the entries of Este brides between 1473 and 1573, as well as that of a royal bride passing through the city in 1598, Margaret of Austria, the new queen of Spain. Tracing their origins to ancient Roman triumphal processions, later medieval royal entries, and to local festival traditions such as the use of floats (*edifizi*), the Renaissance versions explicitly borrowed from and elaborated on the earlier models (Mitchell 1986: 6) (Figure 3.2). Each of the elements that characterized bridal entries gradually took on more definitive form as they were distinguished from the earlier versions, such as the carriages to carry the bride and the carts and mules to carry her dowry, all based on triumphal chariots for the spoils of war in the Roman prototype. Such triumphal carriages first appeared in Rome during papal sponsored Carnival celebrations in the 1460s. In this paper I explore the network of symbols and meanings embedded in these events and what they reveal about gender, status and the state in Renaissance Ferrara.

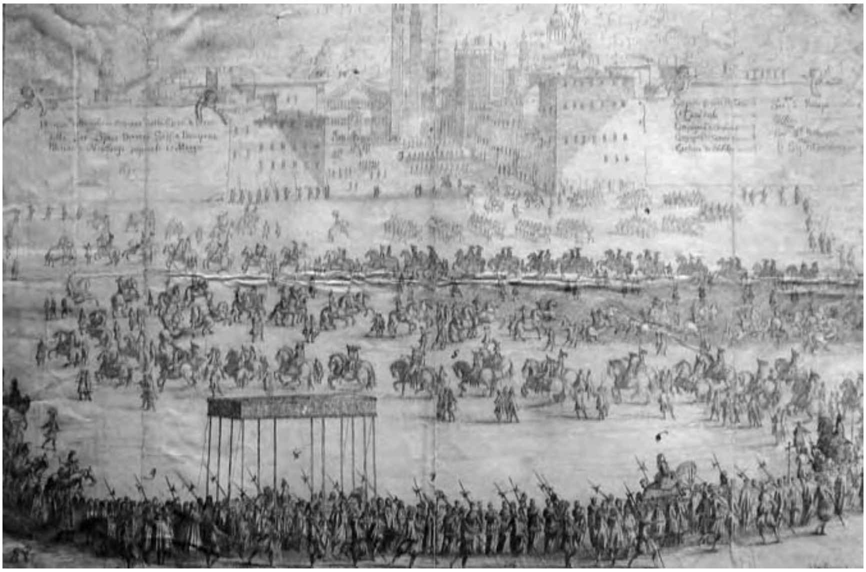

Figure 3.1 Ugolinus [Antonio Ugolini?], "Drawing of the solemn entry into Parma by the most serene bride Dorotea Soffia, Princess of Nuremburg, May 17, 1690," with cortege and city in background. ASMo, Mappario Estense, Stampe e Disegni, 27a. Authorization Prot. N. 4058/V.9.

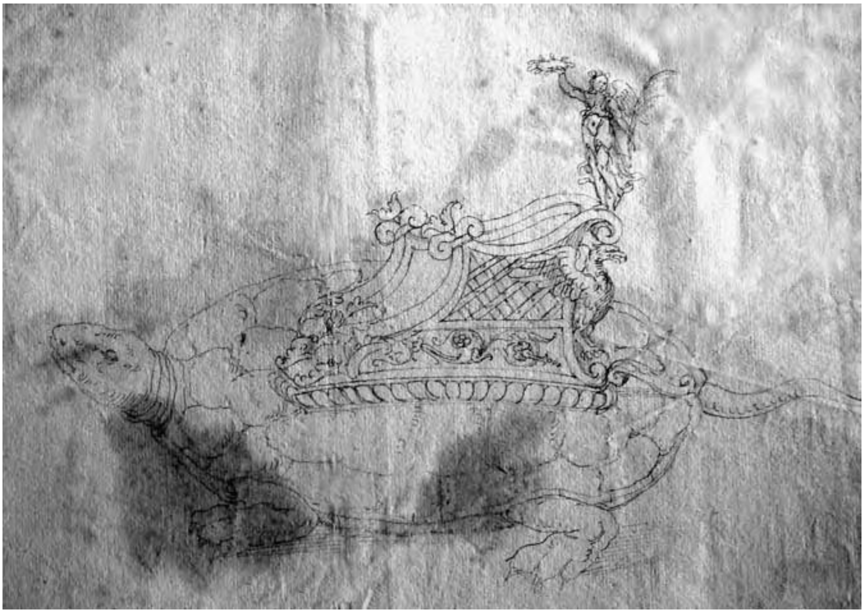

Figure 3.2 Pirro Ligorio (?), "Drawing of a turtle with a baldacchino and a female figure," Ferrara, second half 16th c. Such figures were produced for theatrical displays, such as bridal processions. ASMo, Mappario Estense, Stampe e Disegni, 57/1. Authorization Prot. N. 4058/V.9.

Research on this subject is complicated by the absence of crucial types of documents. Although described to varying degrees in the accounts of chroniclers, letters and in payment records, none of the festival structures erected for brides in late fifteenth and sixteenth century Ferrara have survived in pictorial form.[4] Eleonora's entry was recorded in a fresco cycle at a subsequently destroyed Este palace, Belfiore, but a short description of the decorations survives in a text by Giovanni Sabadino degli Arienti (Gundersheimer 1972). A tradition of providing graphic representations of these events did not take firm hold until the very end of the sixteenth century, when a few images of the journey of Margaret of Austria provide clues to the character of these structures. Parallels can be drawn with structures erected for other ceremonial entrances, such as those for Pope Clement VIII in 1598, but only in the most general way (Figure 3.3). For example, even the most detailed accounts of the ephemeral structures of the early sixteenth century fail to document the precise amount of decoration found on them.

Emulating the antique

Eleonora d'Aragona's entry in July 1473 marked a newly elaborate mode to fete the arrival of a bride in Ferrara. The previous duke, Borso, remained a

Figure 3.3 "Trip of His Highness Pope Clement VIII from Rome to Ferrara, 13 May 1598." Detail showing procession, church of S. Giorgio and Ferrara. BCA, Fondo Crispi, Raccolta Iconografica, Serie E.

bachelor throughout his more than twenty-one year reign, and the wives of his older brother and predecessor, Leonello, although also warmly welcomed, appear to have received somewhat less elaborate festivities than those of the last quarter of the century, not only in Ferrara but elsewhere.[5] To be sure, the investiture of princes and other state celebrations were feted with great pomp throughout the fifteenth century, and many of the devices employed for bridal entries could be found in these other types of celebrations (Rosenberg 1980). Nonetheless Ferrara's wedding festivities achieved renown for their tastefulness, their display of erudition, particularly the newly significant models from antiquity, and for their elevated cost. Bridal entries blended the woman's family, her purity, and the stature and status of the groom and his family with reasons of state.

Such celebrations participated in a larger series of ephemeral phenomena common in Italy in the late fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Triumphal processions marked the election of a new pope in Rome, major feast days, victories in battle and other similar events (Fagiolo 1997). Interest in reviving the forms and architectural elements employed in antiquity for similar celebrations grew rapidly in the last decade of the fifteenth century; not only did Pope Alexander VI erect triumphal arches for his processional march upon his ascension to the papacy, his son Cesare Borgia also orchestrated an elaborate victory march, complete with carriages, richly furnished horses and complicated decorative features mounted on horses, floats and even elephants. Even the sword carried by Cesare sported scenes of a triumphal march (Fagiolo and Madonna 1997: 35).

The entry procession signaled only the one of many festive events surrounding the marriage of a lord. In the case of noblewomen such as Eleonora and Lucrezia Borgia, the journeys they undertook from their homes (Naples and Rome respectively) also involved ceremonial visits to the cities that marked the stages of their trips. Eleonora's arrival in Florence was met with parties, dancing and feasting at extraordinary expense to the Republic, and with her father Rodrigo Borgia then serving as Pope Alexander VI, Lucrezia's passage through the Papal States under his direct dominion included tableaux and pageantry. The city of Foligno prepared the most elaborate entry, including a triumphal carriage with a man dressed as Paris declaring his decision to give the golden apple to Lucrezia rather than Venus because of the former's greater beauty and wisdom. Along the way people recited verses, richly robed Turks manned a Turkish galley and declared their desire to give their lands to Lucrezia as a peacemaker, and within the city walls the images on a trophy drew a parallel between Lucrezia and the storied Lucrezia Romana of antiquity (Saraceno 1502).[6] Travel in Cinquecento Italy was uncomfortable on mules or horses, but as the new duchess of Ferrara, Lucrezia enjoyed the luxury of breaking up the trip by riding in a litter. When possible she and other brides opted to travel on inland waterways in a *bucintoro*, an elegantly outfitted barge with several richly decorated rooms.

Clothing and canopies

Vectors of status, wealth and hope for the future converged in these lavish marriage ceremonies. For chroniclers and ambassadors, no less than the citizenry, the first and most extravagant expense to be noted were the clothes. Damasks, brocades, velvets, furs, silks, often shot through with silver and gold thread, abundantly garbed not only the individuals participating in the formal entry, but their horses and mules as well. Each thread was hand spun, each fabric hand woven and, of course, hand tailored, making the expense of time, energy and materials profligate indeed. Once the cloth had been produced, embellishments such as embroidery or pearls and other jewels were carefully added, the results of dozens of hours of labor by many women. So costly were these fabrics that they continued to be used and incorporated into different garments or decorations until they literally fell apart, only then to be donated as gifts or sold in the city's used clothes markets. Such markets flourished throughout Europe because of the high cost of producing luxury cloth, and dowry and testamentary inventories regularly enumerate each bolt of cloth, piece of clothing and even thread in the possession of the woman or the testator.[7] As was common among aristocrats, Ferrara's ducal family used the occasions of festive entries to deck themselves out in the most luxurious fabrics and up-to-date fashions and thereby confirm and reinforce their elevated stature in the social hierarchy. Elaborate outfits such as Lucrezia's ermine-lined gold and black satin gown with long, loose sleeves and embellished with diamond and ruby jewelry, were as much a part of the display as was the bride herself (Gregorovius 1874: 154).

Since most people owned fewer than ten outfits, the sight of such expensive and luxurious garments aimed to inspire awe in the public, and canny assessments of wealth among knowledgeable nobles and ambassadors. The men who reported on the bridal entries consistently described the women's outfits and the liveries of servants and horses in minute detail. The Mantuan ambassador Canigiani commented on the long train of Margherita Gonzaga's velvet mantle in 1579, richly embroidered with eagles and lilies fashioned of pearls and silver, and her crown of gold lilies festooned with pearls and diamonds (Solerti 1891: xxviii). Luigi Gonzaga noted the criticism Renata of France triggered when she appeared in her bridal procession with a crown, evidently because although the daughter of a king, she herself was not a queen (Fontana 1789: 77). Such distinctions of rank appear to have diminished over time, because Barbara of Austria and Margherita Gonzaga both wore jeweled crowns (Solerti 1891: xxv, xxviii; Equicola 1579: 355).

Luxury also attached to the grooms. Mounted on splendid corsairs, Duke Alfonso I and his son Ercole II greeted Renata sporting the medallion of the Order of St Michael around their necks, and the ducal beret on their heads (Solerti 1891: 77). From servants to courtiers, the men who participated in the processions also donned expensive capes, pants, shirts and caps, while the most highly prized horses were fully furnished with the colors of the bride and groom. Although rarely mentioned, the color of choice for horses was white, for pulling the bridal carriage or, as with Lucrezia Borgia, when she joined the procession on horseback (Cagnolo 1867: 40). Only Lucrezia d'Este wore mourning clothes when she received Lucrezia dei Medici in 1560, since Ercole d'Este had just died; but even this could not dissuade the young woman from decking her sorrow out with her jewels (Sardi 1646: vol. 2, 41). Participation in the celebration was demanded of all citizens. For Renata's arrival, Alfonso ordered shopkeepers and artisans to close their shops at the appointed hour and to assemble on the banks of the Po River near the gate of S. Paolo. Dressed in their finest, those with horses were to outfit them suitably, ride to the river and demonstrate the happiness and jubilation appropriate to a lady of Renata's stature (*Registrum*: cc. 16rv).

The first piece of festival architecture in the processional sequence was the baldachin, or cloth canopy (*baldacchino*), under which the brides rode during their journey through the city (Figure 3.4). Traditionally associated with royalty, these canopies were usually fringed and fabricated out of precious damasks or velvets, and held aloft by four poles attached to a base, typically shouldered by educated men such as lawyers and doctors. Beneath this elegant shelter, the new bride's only charge was to sit still and be seen, to give visual testimony to

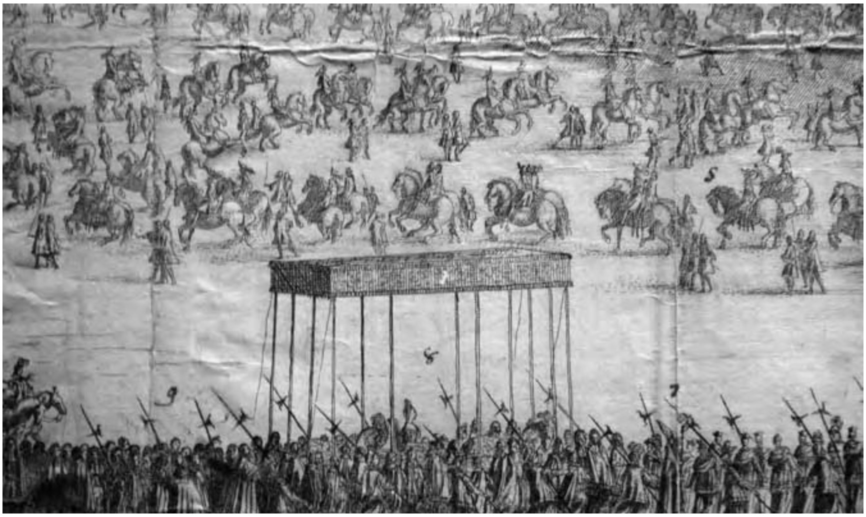

Figure 3.4 Ugolinus [Antonio Ugolini?], Detail showing procession and baldacchino. ASMo, Mappario Estense, Stampe e Disegni, 27a. Authorization Prot. N. 4058/V.9.

the blood lines she brought to the most important task that faced her, the production of a male heir. Her immobility was one of her chief characteristics; her body tightly contained within the heavy brocades, she epitomized the ideal bride, controlled and shepherded about by males under the direction of the males of her new family. She was as much a tableaux as any of those outfitted on the streets to welcome her.

Eleonora's crimson and gold brocade baldacchino cost 550 lire to construct, a princely sum indeed (Tuohy 1996: 409). For Isabella d'Este's entry into Mantua for her marriage to Marquis Francesco Gonzaga, six Mantuan cavaliers carried a white damask baldacchino (Zambotti 1934: 214). Twenty lawyers and twenty physicians wearing the furlined hoods of their professions held aloft Anna Sforza's baldacchino in 1491, and a white silk baldacchino decorated with gold threads shaded Lucrezia Borgia as she rode into Ferrara on horseback in 1502, ahead of a nuptial parade one thousand strong (Zambotti 1934: 313). The expensive fabrics did not last through the wedding, however, for in line with local traditions the crowd ravaged the baldacchino as soon as the bride left its protective shell, the lucky ones grabbing a large enough piece of expensive fabric to sell to second-hand dealers or to keep as souvenirs (Tuohy 1996: 269). Rowdy behavior contrasted with the solemn pomp of the entries, but it allowed release for some of the lower status participants, whose only reward otherwise was the new clothes that they wore—all of which had to be retained for future celebrations, since each member of the ducal family had his or her own colors and hence distinct liveries for courtiers (Ricci 2004).

Banquets and confections

Even more ephemeral were the structures associated with the banquets held over several days of celebration with plays, jousts and other entertainments. Ercole's courtier Pellegrino Prisciano reminded Ercole that the ancients knew how important it was to come together to nourish body and soul with food and talk, thus readied for the fruits of friendship. Such conviviality redounded to the benefit of the Republic as a whole, in Prisciani's view, positively disposing the participants toward the ruler and toward one another (Barbagli 1992: 36). Beyond the sumptuous meals prepared with expensive spices and sugar, to astonish and surprise celebrants, elaborate castles, towers and palaces were placed on tables as accompaniments to the feasts. Much of the pleasure of such concoctions was the feast they presented for the eyes. In the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, sugar sculptures appear to have been confected only for weddings, but by 1530 they were being produced for any magnificent banquet in Ferrara. Eleonora enjoyed seeing them in Rome on her way north to Ferrara, and she found others at her own wedding banquet. At Anna Sforza's wedding feast on February 15, 1491, in a room bedecked with large sugar castles and animals, servants circulated with silver plates laden with the various dishes for everyone to view and admire prior to the start of the meal. The ducal cook for much of the first half of the sixteenth century, Cristoforo di Messisbugo, spelled out the methods he used to create similar structures (Figure 3.5). After frying and draining miniature "bricks" made of a batter of flour, eggs, sugar, butter and saffron (for color), he fried them again in honey before assembling the buildings. Like the figures of Venus, Bacchus and Cupid crafted of sugar for a feast for Ercole II d'Este and his wife, Renata of France, in 1529, the structures could be painted and gilded as well (Ghirardo 2006). The high cost of saffron, imported from Southeast Asia, and refined sugar, imported from Candia (Crete) through Venice, made these decorations exquisitely expensive and utterly useless—perfect vehicles for displaying ducal magnificence and stature.

For Alfonso II's wedding to Barbara d'Austria, his uncle Don Alfonso da Este arranged a sumptuous banquet in the Palazzo Bevilacqua for the couple. Adopting a marine theme, the ceiling was painted with waves, a motif repeated in the three layers of tablecloths. Marine monsters decorated the dining tables and held aloft torches to illuminate the room, and even the spice dispensers were configured as little monsters. Diners washed their hands in giant seashells, and the servants' liveries were embroidered with marine themes. A rocky grotto to one side of the duke's table contained the couple's drinks (Rossetti 1584: 425). Perhaps the most well-known of these banquets was one never consumed (Grana 1869). Giacomo Grana, Cardinal Luigi d'Este's *scalco*, organized a lavish banquet at the Cardinal's palace, Palazzo dei Diamanti, but news of the death of Pius IV de' Medici reached the court an hour before the banquet was to start. In honor of the pope and because Luigi's presence at the conclave was urgently necessary, the banquet was cancelled; nonetheless, it lived on in Grana's optimistic account. A meal of both fish and meat was

Figure 3.5 Pierre Paul Sevin, "Banquet Table with Trionfi, Arranged by Princess Rozana for Cardinal Leopoldo de'Medici in Frascati, 1667." Among the fruit and sweets is a centerpiece depicting Parnassus, Apollo and the nine Muses; also visible are the arms of the Cardinal, Mercury, Pegasus, Diana hunting, Hercules and the Nemean lion and an unidentified female figure. National Museum, Stockholm, NM THC 3614.

planned, with the most unique, excellent and exotic fish ordered from Venice and the Dalmatian coast, along with elaborate sugar figures commissioned in Venice. Wooden *palchi* (bleachers) painted to look like metal were erected half-way down the room, while the walls were draped with cloth adorned with the arms of the pope, the emperor, the king of France, and the House of Este, and festooned with laurel branches, lemons, roses, carnations and other flowers, while stucco figures held torches above the diners. Among the many spectacular features of this feast, napkins artfully folded to represent walls, bulwarks and castles stood out. Most intriguing and novel, however, were the wooden bleachers erected in the garden of the Palazzo dei Diamanti for the "honest people" to observe both the various theatrical performances before, during and after the meal, and the duke and other aristocrats while they dined, rendering the latter both spectators and spectacles themselves (di Pascale 1995: 13) (Figure 3.6).

Theater and festivals

The morning after Eleonora d'Aragona's arrival, the bishop gave the couple his blessing in the cathedral, an event followed by a great feast and dancing.

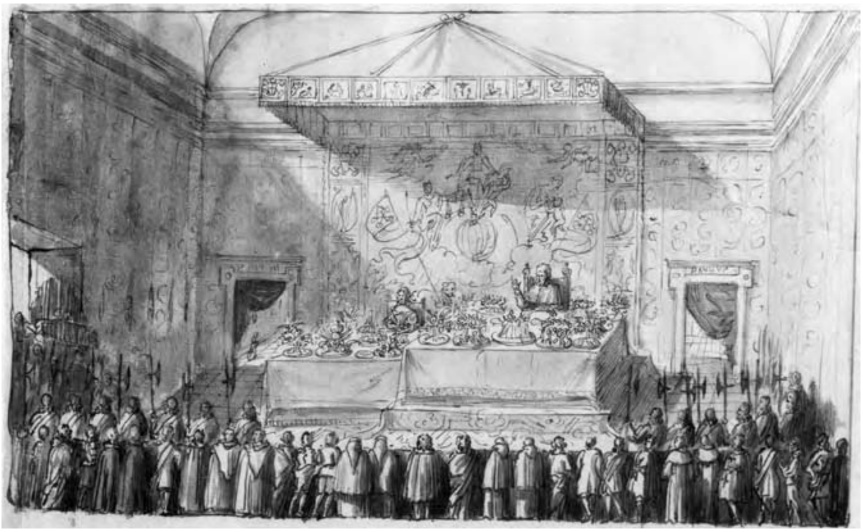

Figure 3.6 Pierre Paul Sevin, "Queen Cristina of Sweden at a Banquet given by Pope Clement IX on December 9, 1668." Beneath a special baldacchino, the queen sat to the pope's right at a lower table. Courtiers observe them eating in front, while the women could peer out from behind curtains on either side. National Museum, Stockholm, NM THC 3606.

A joust the next day and a competition of military skill and horsemanship rounded out the public celebrations, even as the court continued with dances, banquets and plays (*Venuta* 1586: cc. 18–19). Eighteen years later, by the time of the marriage of the couple's teenage son Alfonso I to Anna Sforza of Milan, the duke added theatrical representations of plays by the Roman dramatists Terence and Plautus, much as was done for Alfonso's second marriage eleven years later to Lucrezia Borgia (Tuohy 1996: 257–64). Displays of erudition and knowledge of antiquity became increasingly central to the bridal entries, the symbolism ever more elaborate and the architecture more substantial and more directly referring to ancient models.

Ercole's interest in and knowledge of theater and architecture was well established and vividly documented over more than three decades of his rule. In 1486 he staged the first production of a Roman comedy by Plautus since antiquity, events that he repeated over the next twenty years on important state or family occasions (Povoleda 1976; Tuohy 1996). His close collaborator, Pellegrino Prisciani, shared his interest in reading and theorizing about architecture, and ably discussed the duke's building campaigns in Ferrara.[8] One of the most erudite men in late Quattrocento Ferrara, Prisciani is credited with providing Borso d'Este with drawings that had originally circulated together with Leon Battista Alberti's manuscript, *De re aedificatoria*, a text urged on Alberti by Leonello d'Este, the older brother of both Borso and Ercole.[9] These drawings in turn reportedly provided the models for the exquisite antique backdrop of the Palio scene in Palazzo Schifanoia's Sala dei Mesi (Barbagli 1992: 10).

Prisciani's short treatise emphasized that by spectacle he referred both to the structures *and* the entertainments for which they provided the backdrops (Rotondo 1960; Ferrari 1982; Barbagli 1992). The loggias, piazzas, streets and balconies of the city all served as appropriate settings for festive events and pageants, not just the theater which he recommended the duke erect for the staging of antique plays (Ferrara 1982; Barbagli 1992: 83–5) (Figures 3.7 and 3.8). By contrast with Alberti, Prisciani celebrated the use of the entire city, its *loggie*, colonnades, piazzas and existing buildings as backdrops and settings within which to stage events. Basing his recommendations on the practices of the ancients, Prisciani noted that the loggie where philosophers met to philosophize were surrounded by plants and trees, hence the abundance of flowers, garlands, branches and greenery for the bridal entries—even though several of the entries took place during the winter, well before the annual explosion of spring flowers and foliage. Ferrara's nuptial processions handsomely confirmed Prisciani's views, for the city's houses, streets and public squares all hosted parts of the extravaganzas.

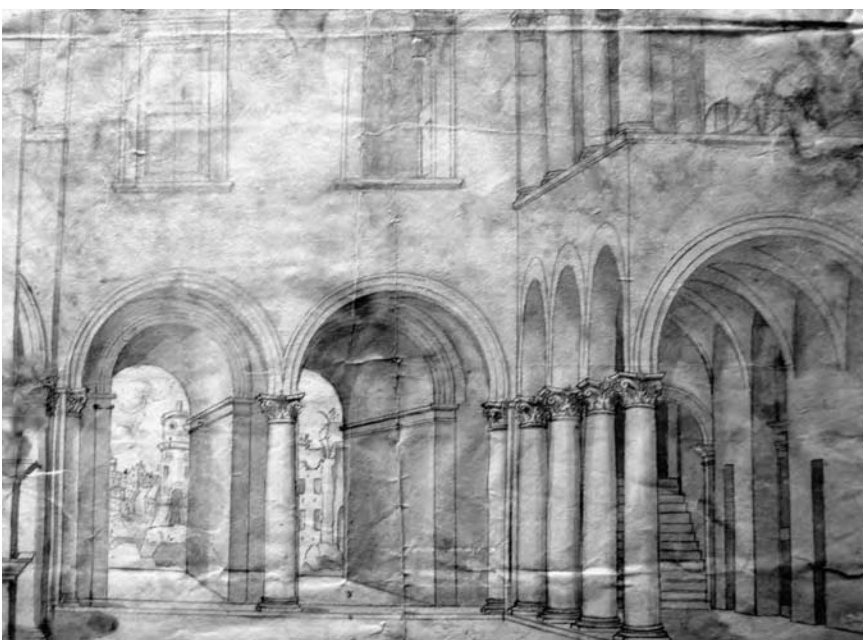

Figure 3.7 Anonymous, Perspective of the courtyard of a palace, probably for a stage set. ASMo, Mappario Estense, Fabbriche, 92/34. Authorization Prot. N. 4058/V.9.

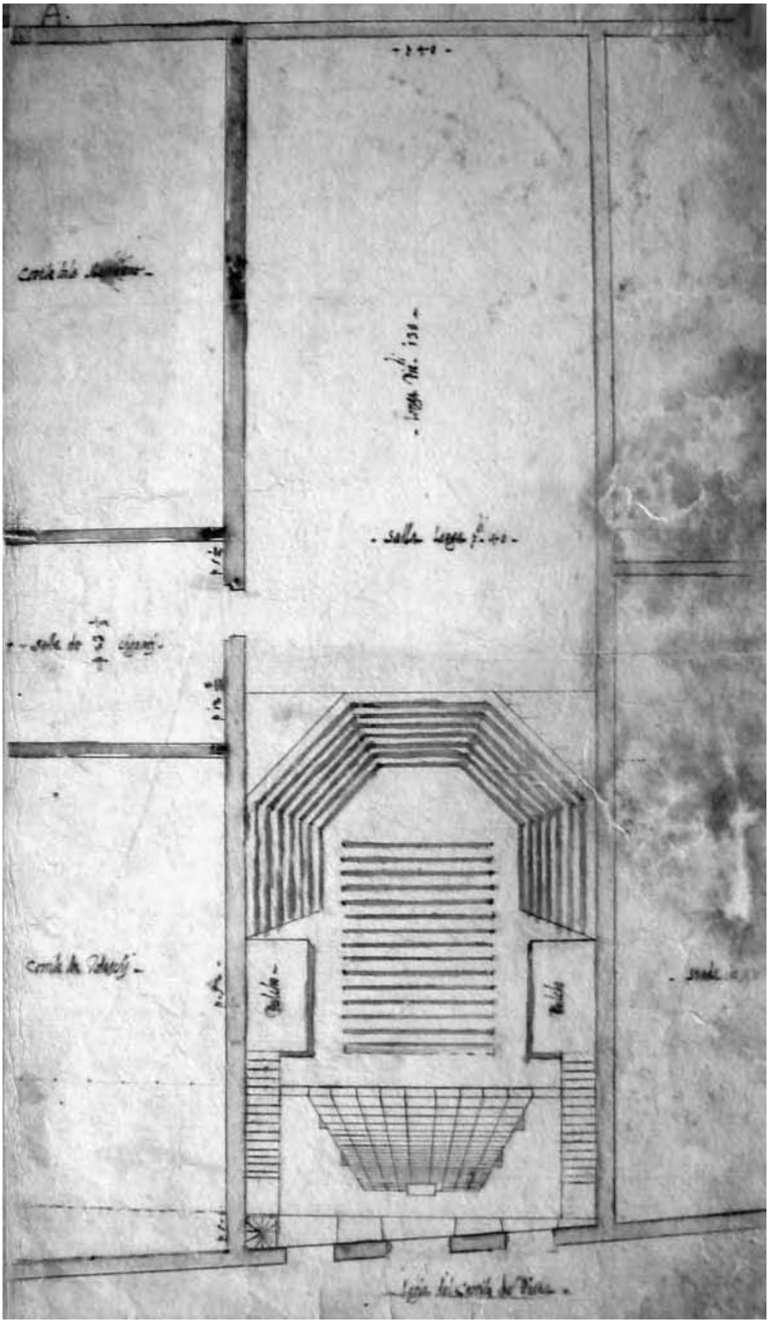

Figure 3.8 Plan of theater, between the Cortile de Tedeschi and the street of S. Domenico, in the Palazzo Ducale. ASMo, Mappario Estense, Fabbriche, 94/21. Authorization Prot. N. 4058/V.9.

For sheer lavishness, Alfonso II once again claimed the prize with the construction of a theater adjacent to the Palazzo del Corte for his marriage to Barbara d'Austria (Solerti 1891: xxvi). In addition to outfitting a new room in the same building, Alfonso leveled the beautiful garden next to it and erected exquisite wooden palaces, mountains and a lake at enormous expense as a setting within which spectacles could unfold, in particular the most famous, the Temple of Love (Equicola 1.XII.1565). Some idea of the extraordinarily elaborate structures erected for weddings emerges in one of Alfonso II's settings for a public joust, such as the castle of Gorgoferusa in early 1561 (Figure 3.9).[10] The Venetian ambassador Alvise Contarini particularly enjoyed the dazzling fireworks set off in the courtyard of the palace, noting that they had been prepared in the ducal workshops and organized perfectly, without even leaving a lingering odor (Contarini 1565a: 15).

Triumphal arches and carriages

For the city and its citizens, temporary triumphal arches erected in public streets were the most prominent features of the bridal displays. The architecture of Eleonora's arrival in 1473 artfully combined ephemeral structures of cloth,

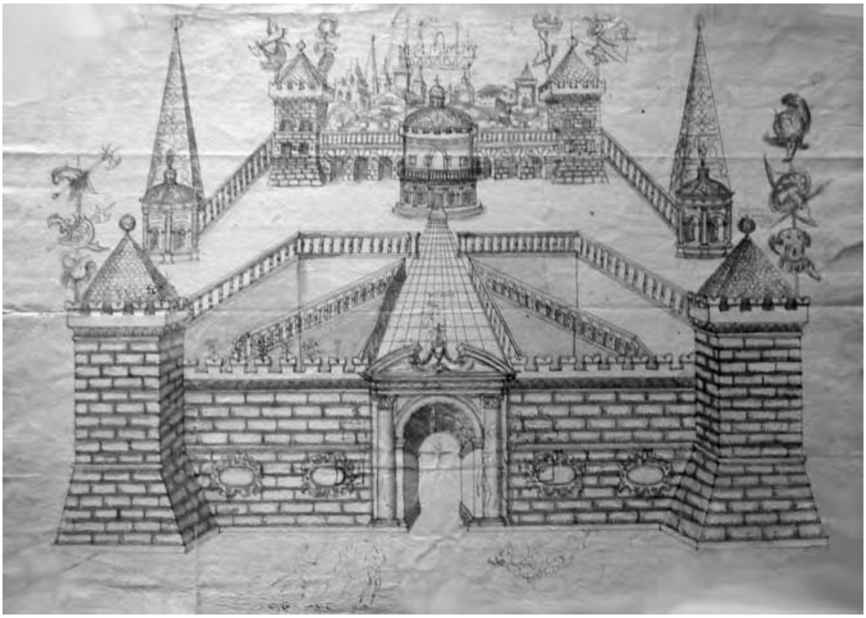

Figure 3.9 "Castle of Gorgoferusa," Ferrara, 16th c. Such elaborate wooden constructions were erected for the festival displays sponsored by Duke Alfonso II. ASMo, Mappario Estense, Stampe e Disegni, 92/18. Authorization Prot. N. 4058/V.9.

greenery and living pageants. Elaborately garbed children sang, danced and played musical instruments on triumphal carriages positioned at strategic points along the cortege's route. Temporary canopies of cloth and leafy branches marked her passage through the city's most important streets, but chroniclers do not record the presence of triumphal arches. Instead, they note the triumphal carriages placed near the church of Santa Maria in Vado, with costumed representations of the seven planets, and another near the church of the Gesuati and on the street of San Francesco. The marriage received symbolic celestial blessing through such images, reminding commoner and noble alike of the broad significance of the union between two exalted families that was now literally "made in heaven." The entrance to the Este Palazzo del Corte was decorated by a pair of gilded giants who guarded a group of figures that functioned as a fountain, spurting wine from their breasts and suggesting the hoped-for fertility of the bride (Tuohy 1996: 270). Two gilded giants turn up again in 1491 at the entrance to the Palazzo del Corte for Anna Sforza's arrival, and once again in 1502 for Lucrezia Borgia, this time guarding the doorway to the Sala Grande where plays were performed (Zambotti 1934: 314; Tuohy 1996: 270). Much later, when Alfonso II greeted Lucrezia dei Medici only weeks after the death of his father and his ascension to the throne, the same triumphal arches did double duty, for Alfonso's ceremonial passage through the city to accept the crown and for the arrival of his bride. Only the inscriptions and paintings were altered to suit different purposes (Equicola 14.II.1560).

The decorations evolved significantly by 1491 and Alfonso's marriage to Anna Sforza, where court records document the presence of several triumphal arches based on Roman models, tribunals and *archivolti*, or vaulted arches. Vaguely religious themes typical of Eleonora's entry vanished; secular displays of antiquity trumped Christian motifs (Brown 1988). By this time Ercole had deepened his interest in ancient architecture and significantly expanded his own activities as architect and patron. Prisciani's treatise, drafted sometime between 1486 and the duke's death in early 1505, summarized the key points about Roman architecture relevant to contemporary building, topics the two men had evidently discussed more than once over the years.[11] Triumphal arches, Prisciani wrote, greatly embellish the forum, or main public square, more than any other decoration (Figure 3.10). This device had especially been employed in antiquity by those who enlarged their cities and their empires, he noted, an obvious reference to the ducal project then taking shape to more than double the size of the city, the famous *Addizione Erculea*, or Herculean Addition (Marcianò 1991). Quoting Tacitus and others, Prisciani declared that the origins of the triumphal arch were to be found in the practices of rulers who enlarged the city walls and left the old gates standing, perhaps for defensive purposes against invaders. Eventually, they began to use the gates to celebrate their triumphs by adorning them with decorations, statues and inscriptions. New arches to be erected in Ercole's time should be positioned at the entrance to the forum and on the city's largest streets, and should have three openings (*fornici*), the middle one in antiquity having served the cavalry and military

Figure 3.10 "Triumphal arch erected with sumptuous magnificence at the entrance to Piazza Campidoglio for the glory of His Holiness Pope Innocent XIII on the occasion of the solemn possession at San Giovanni in Laterano on November 16, 1721 erected by the most excellent Conservatoers of Rome Domenico Serlupi, Camillo Massumi and Prospero Caffarelli, and Pietro de Nobili Viteleschi Prior." Design of arch by Alessandro Specchi, architect of the Roman Senate, 1724. While erected much later, this triumphal arch was typical of those found throughout Europe from the sixteenth through the eighteenth centuries. BCA, Raccolta Iconografica, Serie F.

men, the lateral ones the matrons who greeted the returning heroes.[12] The arch's size was to be calculated based upon its location and in relation to the width of the street, in Prisciani's view, and his measurements follow those suggested by Alberti in *De re aedificatoria*. The pilasters should be in the Doric order, but the Corinthian and Ionic orders could also be used. Since the treatise breaks off at this point, Prisciani's full views on temporary arches elude us, but since he apparently helped organize the entries of both of Alfonso I's brides, the standards outlined above probably guided the constructions.

Observers of Anna Sforza's entry noted the presence of four arches, all of which respected Prisciani's suggestions about siting. The first stood adjacent to Palazzo Schifanoia, a structure dedicated to relaxed family entertainment and hosting prominent visitors; it is most famous today for the Sala dei Mesi fresco cycle commissioned by Borso d'Este in the late 1460s (Varese 1989). Another arch stood near the long and prominent via della Giara; a third adjacent to the church of San Francesco marked an important religious and upper-class residential part of the city on another main street. The last arch graced the main piazza in front of the Palazzo del Corte, apparently near its arched entry and close to the equestrian portrait of Ercole I's father Nicolò d'Este (Bellini 1491). Described as having been erected in the Roman style, the arches were decorated with sculptures, such as the chariot of the sun drawn by two horses on the one near Palazzo Schifanoia, and the chariot of Cupid for the one near San Francesco (Tuohy 1996: 267). The combination of celestial motif and the Greek deity of love again reminded viewers of the global significance of the marriage, and testified to Prisciani's influence in the decorative schemes, since astrology was one of his chief passions (Warburg 1985). By 1492, temporary triumphal arches were also being used in Rome to celebrate the ascension of Rodrigo Borgia to the papacy, one of which even replicated the Arch of Constantine and carried inscriptions to Julius Caesar and Alexander the Great—Borgia's reference to the name he adopted as pope, Alexander VI, and to that of his son, Caesar (Mitchell 1990: 25). So significant were triumphal arches that they appeared in all of the subsequent bridal corteges, with the exception of the unusual entry of Renata of France in 1528. By mid-century, the practice had spread throughout Italy, for even Lucrezia d'Este was feted with arches upon her arrival in Pesaro for her marriage to the Duke of Urbino.[13]

Not surprisingly, where evidence of specific inscriptions has survived, those for the bridal processions typically lauded the bride, the groom, the couple and their families, and anticipated a long and fruitful union. For the marriage of Margherita and Alfonso II, thirteen arches or gateways were constructed, the first directly in front of the site where she alighted from the ducal bucintoro at San Giorgio. Inscriptions linked their names, and then continued with such optimistic mottoes as *Boni amoris coniugatori* (to the marriage of honest love)*; suavis iugi fabbricatori* (to the maker of a pleasant yoke)*; castae veneris conciliatori* (to the conciliator of pure love)*; amori mutuo puro pleno* (for a changed, pure and full love)*; fidei incorruptae inconcussae inculpatae* (for an incorruptible, unshakeable and blameless loyalty)*; uxor tua sicut vitis abundans in lateribus*

Domos tua (your wife is like an abundant vine beside your house) (Guarini cited in Solerti 1891: 111–16).

Rather than mutely decorating crucial intersections, the triumphal arches dynamically engaged members of the cortege as well as observers on the streets and balconies; in addition to the sculptures, they were alive with figures reciting poetry or enacting pageants (Zambotti 1934: 323). The content of these living tableaux can be determined only in the most general terms; for Lucrezia Borgia's arrival, for example, the chronicler Bernardino Zambotti describes the enactment of Hydra being slain by Hercules at one of the triumphal arches, but how many characters were involved and precisely how this tableau was related to the triumphal arch elude us (Tuohy 1996: 268). As with several other Herculean motifs, this one alluded to Duke Ercole's (Hercules) godlike prowess. In addition to the arches, the 1502 wedding included six tribunals as platforms for youngsters to sing, dance or recite verses. As Tuohy noted, the horns, flutes, singing and cannonades would have made it impossible actually to hear the recitations in most cases, but in any event the visual feast remained the most important component (Tuohy 1996: 267). And popular they were; chronicles recount that the streets were so packed that it was difficult to pass, and the windows were full of women and girls leaning out to watch the procession (Equicola 14.II.1560).

Ducal payment records indicate that the arch near the Schifanoia palace contained sculpted horses for the chariot of the sun, but other details are lacking (dal Cavalo 1491). Describing the structures fabricated for the arrival of Anna Sforza in a letter to her son Ippolito in Hungary, Eleonora d'Aragona enthusiastically discussed four triumphal arches dedicated to Jove, Venus, Mercury and Mars, all being dignified creations constructed with great artistry (d'Aragona 1491). Other sources indicate that Cupid's chariot sat adjacent to the church of San Francesco (Zambotti 1934: 313; Brown 1988; Tuohy 1996: 267). The themes were unmistakable: fertility, love, war and patriarchal dominion, the vectors of these quintessentially human engagements intersecting with the relevant planets and ancient deities, underscoring the Este court's belief in the relationship between the actions of the heavens and human events (Warburg 1985; Barbagli 1992).

The triumphal arches and other constructions were indeed ephemeral, but evidently robust enough to last several months (Figure 3.11). The tableaux seem to have unfolded on and around them, so they were of sufficiently sturdy wood and plaster construction to support people and to survive Ferrara's winter rains and snow. They certainly demanded the talents of the court's most prominent artists: Ercole de' Roberti seems to have worked on the triumphal arches for Anna Sforza's entry in 1491, and the court painter Fino supplied the coats of arms and masks for the tableau of Hercules and Hydra, and he also painted the gateway at the bridge of San Giorgio for the wedding (Rosetti 1491a). The celebrated fifteenth century court painter Cosme Tura painted the canopy carried over Eleonora during her entry (Tuohy 1996: 409). Doing the work was one thing; getting paid another. One of the painters, Nicoletto,

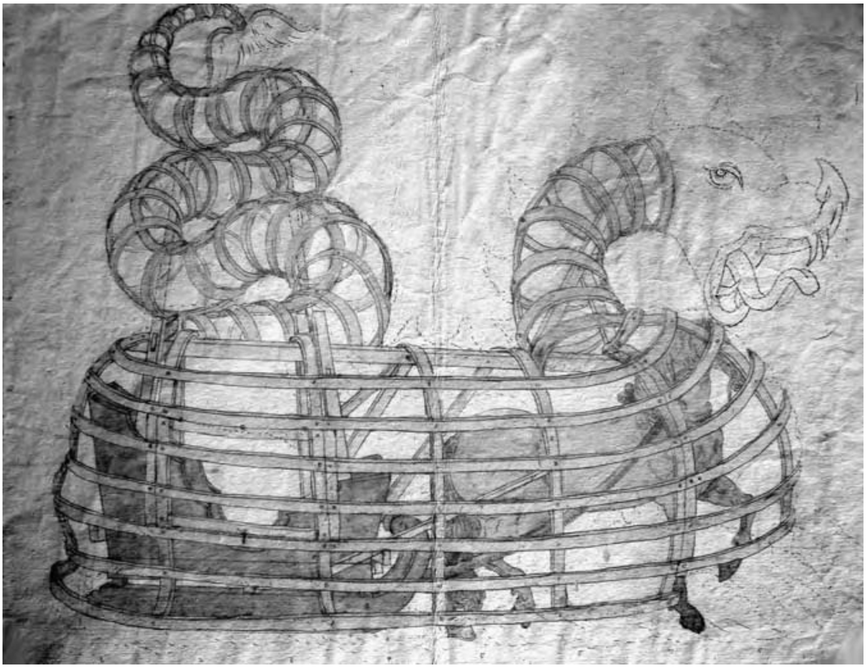

Figure 3.11 Anonymous, Dragon float pulled by a horse with sled. ASMo, Mappario Estense, Stampe e Disegni, 57/2. Authorization Prot. N. 4058/V.9.

wrote to the duchess in June 1491 seeking payment for the paintings he completed for Alfonso's wedding four months earlier, and other craftsmen were not paid until nearly one and one-half years later (Nicoletto 1491; de Tristan 1492).

Account books record the names of many carpenters and painters engaged in the building activities in the months before the bride's arrival, working day and night on the various structures being constructed in honor of Lucrezia Borgia's wedding, as Bernardino de'Prosperi wrote to Isabella d'Este in January 1502 (de'Prosperi 1502a).[14] Even the process of construction and decoration excited the attention of residents, who watched the apparatuses take shape over the weeks and months prior to the actual arrivals, without actually being able to see them, for they were unveiled just before the ceremonies were scheduled to begin (Tuohy 1996: 267). The most prominent painters and artisans in Ferrara participated in all phases of decorations for the nuptial events, from painting banners to stage sets (Tuohy 1996: 270). In a letter to a friend, Giovanni Bellini, neither a member of the court nor involved in the wedding preparations, described the four triumphal arches being erected for Anna Sforza's arrival as "marvelous and beautiful," and he indicated both his understanding of the entire sequence of festivities as well as the value of Anna's dowry and the jewels she brought with her (Bellini 1491). For those unable to get a good look at the arches during the celebrations, ample time to study them remained after the marriage. Biagio Rossetti wrote to Ercole I in June 1491 that three of the triumphal arches erected for Anna Sforza's arrival in February of the same year had just been dismantled, and that he planned to disassemble the last one in the main square the following week (Rosetti 1491b).

Este brides abroad

Ferrara was not the only city to enact elaborate entries for brides. Well before her entry into Ferrara, Pope Alexander VI arranged a spectacular series of events in Rome for Lucrezia's departure at the end of 1501 and the first days of January 1502. Apart from races for horses, men, women and buffaloes, a joust took place centered on a large wooden castle defended by eight men. In Piazza Navona (then known as "agone") on January 1, the pope organized the festivals normally held for Carnevale, the period prior to the start of Lent. Piazza San Pietro (before Gianlorenzo Bernini's colonnade) was closed off by wooden barriers, and a parade of foot soldiers in splendid livery, the leaders of the *rioni* of Rome, and other soldiers circulated around the piazza with thirteen ornate triumphal carriages. The first carried a representation of Hercules sounding a horn representing the figure on the Campidoglio, on the second were two cardinals outfitted like the Dioscuri on Montecavallo (now the Quirinale), on the third two bulls, a Borgia symbol. The fourth bore a city model, the fifth a trophy and many spoils, and the sixth a horse like that of the statue of Marcus Aurelius, then located adjacent to the basilica of San Giovanni in Laterano. De'Prosperi did not describe the next four carriages, but the last three included representations of Caesar on horseback and the graces, alluding to Lucrezia Borgia's brother Cesare Borgia, and were followed by his soldiers and courtiers carrying the spoils from the cities they had conquered with him throughout northern and central Italy (de Prosperi 1502b).

Neither Ferrara nor Mantua put on a comparable show for the marriage of Ercole's eldest daughter, Isabella, to Marquis Francesco Gonzaga, but nonetheless seven theatrical backdrops "in the antique style" were erected in different parts of Mantua as backdrops for diverse congratulatory recitations (Zambotti 1934: 214).[15] Although the chronicler offers no more precise explanation, it appears to describe constructions that imitated the stage and backdrop of an antique Roman theater. In any event, each of the seven stages was alive with mythological scenes representing the seven planets and the gods who took their names, once again linking astrology, deities and human events (Pizzagalli 2001: 44). As in the case of similar symbols for the Este in Ferrara, the glory redounded to the humans, since the clear message viewers carried away was the link between celestial beings and these privileged people.

The anonymous account of the arrival of Lucrezia d'Este in Pesaro as bride of Francesco Maria della Rovere in 1571 contains among the most detailed descriptions of arches and inscriptions of all of the Este weddings (*Solenne*

1869). Mounted on what appears to have been an Arabian horse presented to her by the Duke, Lucrezia shifted to the *lettiga* (litter) for her journey into the city. The five arches celebrating her arrival linked the wishes for a fruitful and happy marriage with political references to the importance of the della Rovere family, particularly through the repetition of *rovere* motifs, branches and leaves of the oak tree, the family's emblem, and of the Este. Just inside the city gates, the first arch was swathed in faux trophies, while the second included a depiction of a sacrifice by Juno. The third contained a pictorial account of the history of Romulus and Remus, founders of Rome, perhaps alluding to the della Rovere family's pretensions to being an ancient Roman family. Four nude *puttini* represented the four seasons on one panel, and another depicted a female figure seated at table writing, with the caption *haec tua nomina erunt* (these will be your names). The last arch included gilded statues of Francesco and his father, Guidobaldo d'Urbino, as well as two large, unidentified female figures and seven smaller ones holding an oak branch. This arch also depicted the seven liberal arts, and Faith casting out vices and a temple with the inscription *Victoria in sapientia* (victory through knowledge). In the piazza in front of the cathedral, a figure brandishing a sword stood atop a newly erected and painted column, and adjacent to San Domenico church stood four stucco figures of popes: Pope Sixtus and Pope Giulio II (both of the Della Rovere family), Paul III Farnese, Lucrezia d'Este's uncle, and the current Pope Pius V. Despite frenzied work by the Pesarese, the last triumphal arch was unfinished when Lucrezia arrived.

Processional sequence

As the fifteenth century ended and the sixteenth century wore on, Este brides arrived in an increasingly tight and highly ritualized sequence of events, beginning with the arrival the night before the celebrations began (Figure 3.12). Eleonora met Ercole in Consandoli and then proceeded to Ferrara, but she spent the night at the San Giorgio monastery to prepare herself for the next day (Tuohy 1996: 265). Subsequent brides drew closer to the city before receiving the official welcome of the Duke, but also waited one night outside Ferrara before their formal entry. Anna Sforza was greeted at the church of San Giorgio to the southeast of the city outside the walls and across the river. She and her court slept at the monastery, so that "the next day the entire populace could admire the nuptial cortege's spectacle of elegance and wealth" (Zambotti 1934: 219). The following day the duke and a large number of people on foot and on horseback escorted her across the bridge north to Palazzo Schifanoia, then to the church of San Francesco, back down to the main shopping street and via del Saraceno to the main square. In a ritual repeated almost unchanged by all subsequent brides, the procession wound around the same streets and passed the same important civic and religious structures, both for maximum effect and because these streets were long and straight. For observers, the key moments in the entries included the arrival of the bride and her stay

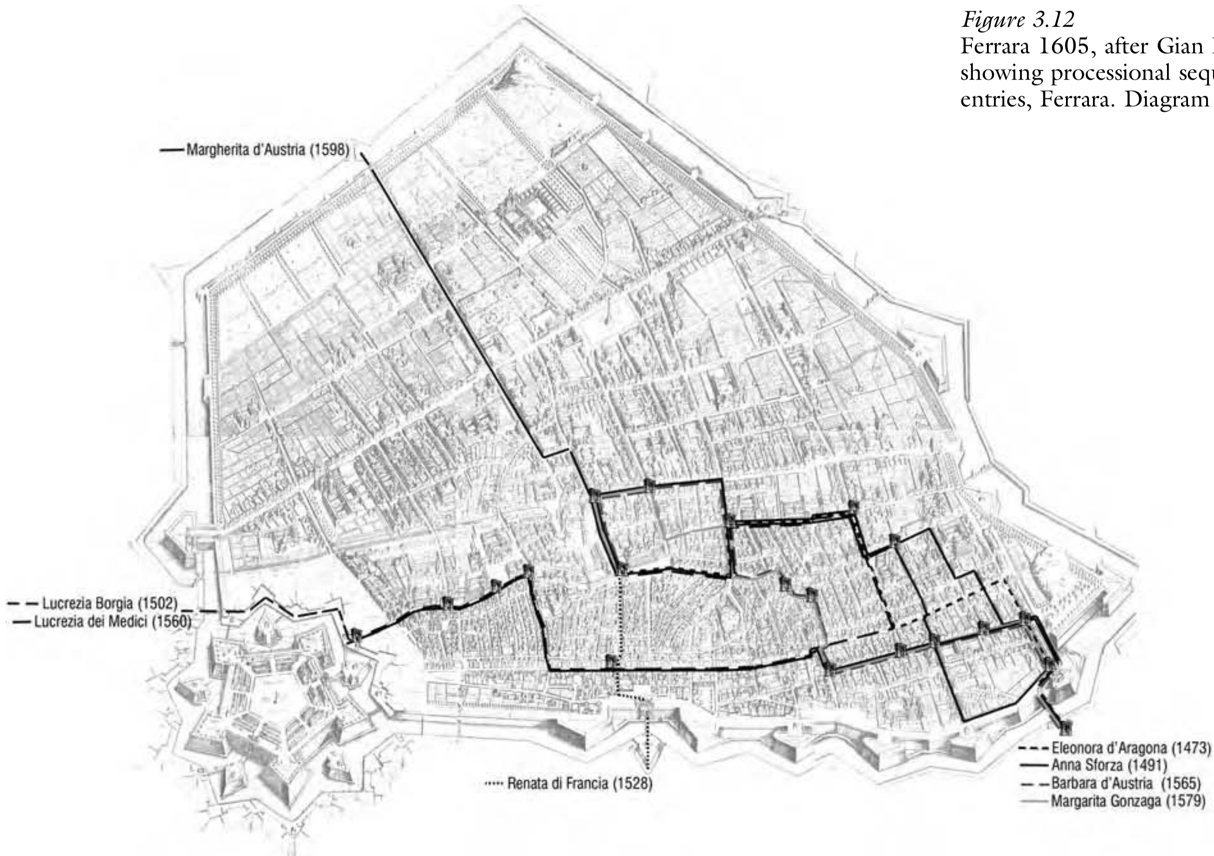

Figure 3.12
Ferrara 1605, after Gian Battista Aleotti, showing processional sequences of bridal entries, Ferrara. Diagram by author.

overnight, then the entrance through the city gate, and finally the sequence of strategically deployed arches: the ducal retreat at Schifanoia, the major Franciscan church and location of a second major ducal palace, noted in records as "da San Francesco," and today known as Palazzo Renata of France, and finally to the main square. Eleonora's entry had been more direct. She too crossed the bridge at San Giorgo, turned to the via Grande, then the city's most prominent street, turned north past the monastery of San Girolamo dei Gesuati, west on the street of San Francesco, and then to the city's main square.

Lucrezia spent the night before the wedding at the house of Alberto d'Este in Borgo San Luca across the River Po to the southwest, therefore she entered not from San Giorgio but from the old, early medieval castle Castel Tedaldo, which offered an opportunity for a more circuitous route. Her procession was therefore much longer, since she joined via Grande at the opposite end of the city, rode all the way to Castel Nuovo, then doubled back and picked up the earlier route all the way to the southeast, then repeated the route of her predecessors, north past Palazzo Schifanoia and San Francesco to the main square and the Palazzo del Corte (Zambotti 1934: 313; Tuohy 1996: 265). Even though the Addizione Erculea was nearly complete, Lucrezia's route did not include a detour to the newest part of the city.

Once again, the arrival of Renata of France differed from those of both earlier and later brides. Although some chroniclers claim that she was scheduled to enter through the gate of S. Pietro, in the end she traveled through the gate of S. Paolo and proceeded directly to the piazza and the cathedral. According to the chroniclers, the route was organized in this way because the thundering of the cannons would be more evident there, and the duke wanted pomp above all. No triumphal arches marked her passageway; instead, the streets were carpeted with the colors of the Este family as she was carried through on a litter topped with a baldacchino (Fontana 1789: 79).[16] Although it is possible that the route was altered after matters got out of hand during her entrance in the Ferrarese city of Modena a few days earlier, ducal records give no indication that triumphal arches or tableaux had ever been planned.[17] Giovanni Ricci suggested that Alfonso I found the ritual violence associated with the final stages of the processions inappropriate for the daughter of a king; having forbidden the violence in Modena, Ricci thought he probably did likewise in Ferrara (Ricci 2004: 97). Communal records paint a different picture; a series of proclamations in November 1528 clarify the circumstances (*Registrum*: cc. 16r–17r). After first commanding that all citizens of Ferrara return to the city within eight days, Alfonso noted that many were grieving over loved ones recently lost to the plague, and while he claimed the plague had ended, people were still wearing mourning garments. Since their friends and neighbors were commiserating with them by wearing sober clothes, the entire city looked to him like a miserable widow. Not wanting to displease Renata, he ordered citizens to abandon their mourning garments, forget their past woes, and join in the celebrations for Renata's arrival. It was of enormous significance to the Duke that neither the bride nor the foreign ambassadors should be greeted by a city in mourning.

Like most of the other brides, however, Renata also entered the cathedral to have the union and the rings blessed by the bishop of Comacchio, and she received the keys to the city from Alfonso's castellan (Sardi 1646: 7–8). As one commentator later remarked, even though the marriage itself had taken place earlier through a proxy, ducal marriages typically were confirmed in public, in the presence of his subjects.[18] Such public rituals underscored the bride's importance to the city's future, not only as regent whenever her husband was absent, but as mother of the future ruler.

Anna, Lucrezia, Renata of France and the three brides of Alfonso II ended their processions by passing through the Arco del Cavallo, the entrance to the courtyard of the Palazzo del Corte, the principle residence of the Este at least since the thirteenth century (Ghirardo 2004). Once inside the courtyard the women came to the foot of the ceremonial staircase that constituted the formal entrance to the Este quarters (Plate 3). Lined with sturdy balustrades decorated with two Este symbols, the marguerite and the diamond, the marble stairs paused at a landing halfway up, giving an opportunity for the newcomer to stop and look about at the elegant courtyard with its arcaded portico, sundial and private court chapel—most of which has disappeared, but the staircase is intact. By 1481 Ercole had decked it out with an elegance befitting its role as the ceremonial entrance to the palace. Beneath its leaded and vaulted canopy and a dome above the landing, in a ritual repeated in all of the bridal entries, the women of the family greeted the new bride and welcomed her to her new home.[19] Reflecting the gendered division of space in renaissance cities, in each of the cases examined here, men of the family left the city to meet the bride, while the women waited to greet her at the entrance to the family palace. The men in effect seized control of the situation and went out into the *agrios*, the world outside, while the women waited for the newcomer to come to them in the *domos*, the far more confined world of the family, the hearth and all of the devices that presumed to shelter women.

The covered marble staircase was also the entrance to the semi-public events staged for courtiers, such as the Roman comedies Ercole enthusiastically presented. For these events, the Sala Grande, a spacious room overlooking the square and facing the cathedral, was normally outfitted with the tiered wooden seating, stage and elaborate wooden stage set in the form of an urban streetscape (Povoleda 1976; Tuohy 1996: 259–62). So numerous were the guests to the 1502 wedding of Lucrezia and Alfonso that the duke decided to leave the Sala Grande for banquets and dances, and to erect a raised passageway to the Palazzo della Ragione, where a theater had been set up in a large hall. With doors and fake windows, the sets were complemented by a range of expensive costumes and masks, the traditional Carnival costume for residents of Ferrara. The plan for the theater was based on antique models as suggested by Prisciani in his *De Spectacula* but the ducal expense registers note that merlons were painted on the houses, suggesting that the urban backdrop mirrored contemporary rather than ancient housing (Tuohy 1996: 257–64).

When Barbara of Austria arrived in Ferrara in December 1565 as the second wife of the widowed Alfonso II d'Este, the celebrations extended over a far longer time period than had even been the case for those of Lucrezia Borgia (Marcigliano 2003: 50). Balls, feasts and theatrical spectacles continued for weeks, including the December 25, 1565 staging of *Il Tempio d'Amore*, a chivalrous spectacle that combined the traditional tournèe with the dramatic representation of a chivalric tale. The garden adjacent to the Duchess' apartment was leveled and replaced by a temporary theater with semi-circular tiers of seating. The complicated sets included a Temple of Love, through which one could ascend to the Temples of Virtue and Honor through chivalric combat. Changes of scenery, an extremely complicated plot and triumphal entrances of lavishly costumed characters made for an impressive spectacle, at the termination of which was the most stunning feature of all, a dazzling display of fireworks (Contarini 1565b: 250).

Magnificent displays also cost magnificent sums of money, and even though the citizens of Ferrara suffered fearsome poverty in 1560 when Alfonso II's first bride arrived, the extravagant displays and wasteful production and consumption of food, clothing and the like went on unabated. Only one chronicler noted the current dismal state of affairs in the city, adding that Alfonso II ordered a census to be made of the poor, and he also ordered that nobles and wealthy merchants help alleviate their suffering by dispensing aid. Not surprisingly, he chose to spend lavishly on the bridal entry without further concern for the grave shortages in his city (Sardi 1646: vol. 2, 42). To help defray costs, Alfonso expected the commune and others to cover some of the costs. For the arrivals of both Lucrezia de' Medici and Barbara of Austria, the city contributed funds for the temporary constructions. For the former, this consisted primarily of painting the arches and creating sculptural figures; for the latter, the significantly greater cost of erecting tribunals and four of the triumphal arches.[20] One of the arches for the entry of Margherita Gonzaga in 1579 was paid for by Portuguese Jews then living in Ferrara (Guarini cited in Solerti 1891).

The last sixteenth-century bridal entry

By the end of the century, when Margarita of Austria arrived in Ferrara as the spouse of Philip III King of Spain, the Este no longer ruled the duchy. The legitimate line died out with Alfonso II, and notwithstanding the papacy's willingness to accept previous Este heirs born out of wedlock such as Leonello and Borso, Pope Clement VIII seized the opportunity to acquire the duchy to replenish the church's coffers and gain direct control over the prosperous city.[21] Clement VIII personally traveled to Ferrara to reclaim the city, and as part of his plan to win the loyalty of its citizens, he staged several triumphal entries during 1598, that of Margarita being the only one for a woman (Gabrielli 1598). Accompanied by her mother and brother, the young woman was invited to have a special proxy wedding celebration in Ferrara officiated by the pope.

While en route to Spain and two months before arriving in Ferrara, she learned of the death of Philip's father, Philip II, which instantly lifted her to the rank of queen and at once raised the stakes for the ceremonies being planned.

Margarita's entourage paused the night before her arrival at Pontelagoscuro at the Este villa of Isola, and the following day she made her entry at the northernmost gate, Porta degli Angeli, from which Ercole I d'Este's broad avenue ran straight to the center. The typical features of earlier bridal entries were repeated for Margarita: the elaborate baldacchino, triumphal arches, expensive fabrics, new liveries for attendants and pages, as well as cleaned streets and freshly painted decorations. Gabrielli reported that the suite set aside for her accommodations in the Palazzo del Corte was also richly outfitted. Splendid tapestries shot through with threads of silk, gold and silver in the first room represented the creation story as told in Genesis, while the remaining four rooms were draped with luxurious crimson and gold velvet, fabrics with white, red and rose silk and gold threads with foliage and grape bunches, and superb brocades (Gabrielli 1598: 1rv). Among the new items was a small silver table with mirrors and "other things women need, which I do not know about and cannot discuss" (Gabrielli 1598: 1v). Because the wedding blessing occurred in the cathedral, this too was decked out in sumptuous fabrics, shields with the arms of the popes and cardinals, tapestries decorated with the stories of Ferrara's patron saints, St George and St Maurelio, and others with events from the New Testament (Gabrielli 1598: 2rv). Unusually, a separate staircase flanked by two fake marble statues of St Peter and St Paul was constructed in the palace courtyard leading to the Sala Grande, where the queen was to be received by the pope. A second unusual item erected for Margarita was a wooden structure placed just outside the Porta degli Angeli, where she sat until welcomed by the cardinals, after which she mounted a horse and proceeded through the gate into the city.

Extravagant as Gabrielli reports the festival structures to be, their tone and content differed markedly from those of earlier entries. Gone were the evocations of planets, Roman deities and other secular references; in the full flush of the Counter Reformation, now all references directed attention to the scriptures and to saints. The triumphal arch erected in the palace's courtyard, for example, though adorned with two female figures in simulated marble and decorated with the arms of Clement VIII, Philip III and Margarita, now carried inscriptions referring to the divinely ordained nuptials. Another similar arch near the Porta degli Angeli also displayed the same coats-of-arms, and words reminding viewers that the angels exulted to see the royal and virtuous Margarita. Even the play staged with Jesuit priests for the delight of the wedding party no longer drew from classical antiquity but from the Hebrew bible. It recounted the story of Judith and Holofernes, Judith clearly representing the pious and chaste woman who risked her life to save her city from Assyrian invaders (Gabrielli 1598: 10v). Instead of detailed accounts of banquets, dances and parties, Gabrielli offered the information that the queen attended mass twice daily, but that she enjoyed the horse races and the peasant dances and boat races with the rural women of Comacchio held in the castle's moat.

The binding of ancient content with ancient forms so evident in the previous entries had been sundered, leaving the antique forms to carry religious rather than roman iconography, but the position of the women remained unchanged. With her brother standing in for her spouse, Margaret took her vows in the cathedral, passing symbolically from the supervision of her father and, in his absence, her brother, to that of her husband, just as the Este women had done for 130 years before her. She was not destined to remain in Ferrara but to go on to Spain, so the only mark she left was the traces in the chroniclers' descriptions and in some etchings completed a couple of decades later. Like the Este women, she enjoyed only a temporary right of passage through the city's streets and in its main square, having been made visible to the public only in that vulnerable period between the departure from the home of her father and the subsequent enclosure into the palace of her new husband's family.

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Notes

1 Eleonora d'Aragona's entry took place on July 3, 1473; that of Anna Sforza on February 11, 1491; Lucrezia Borgia February 2, 1502; Ercole II's wife Renata of France on December 1, 1528; and Alfonso II's three wives: Lucrezia de' Medici on February 17, 1560, Barbara of Austria on December 5, 1565 and Margherita Gonzaga of Mantova in February 1579. Lucrezia de'Medici died a year later, on April 21, 1561, and Barbara of Austria died September 19, 1572. Following the papal takeover of Ferrara, Margarita d'Austria, new queen of Spain, made a triumphal entry on November 13, 1598. The chief published sources on entries subsequent to Eleanora's: Anna Sforza (Brown 1988); Lucrezia Borgia (Zambotti 1934: 308–38); Renata of France (Sardi 1646: 7–8); Lucrezia de'Medici (Antolini 1894); Barbara d'Austria (*Narratione* 1565); Margherita Gonzaga (Guarini cited in Solerti 1891: xxx–xxxvii); Margarita d'Austria (Gabrielli 1598, reprinted in Mitchell 1990).

2 Narratives of bridal processions in Ferrara have typically been included in other texts, and have been little studied; the literature on other triumphal entries is far larger. Three of the most informative texts that treat entries are Fagiolo 1980; Mitchell 1986 and Fagiolo 1997.

3 The literature on women's roles in Renaissance Italy is vast, but a good place to begin is Davis and Farge 1993. A good indication of the expectations of Ferrara's dukes emerges in Ercole II d'Este's response to the king of France, who had requested that Ercole's wife travel to France. Ercole wrote that "*non [è] costume de mariti in Italia lasciar che le lor donne, vadano in si longhi viaggi, et sapendo voi che volemo la nostra appresso perchè ci faccia de figlioli* [it is not customary for husbands

in Italy to permit their wives to undertake such long trips, and you know that we want ours here for her to give us children]" (Fontana 1789: 230).

4 Eleonora d'Aragona's entry into Rome in June 1473 was recorded in a fresco in the Corsia Sistina at Santo Spirito Hospital near the Vatican. The badly damaged fresco depicts her kissing the feet of Pope Sixtus IV. I thank Diana Bryant for alerting me to this painting and for allowing me to read a draft of her article on portraits of Eleonora d'Aragona, "Maestoso e bella, colta e gentile": established and postulated portraits of Eleonora d'Aragona, Duchess of Ferrara (1473–93)."

5 Camilla d'Aragona's marriage to Costanzo Sforza, lord of Pesaro, in 1475, was celebrated with similar pomp and reported in detail in a separately published brochure (*Ordine* 1475).

6 Lucrezia Romana is the famous Roman matron who, raped by a friend of her husband's, committed suicide in shame at the dishonor she brought upon her family. Drawing such a parallel with the pope's daughter might even have smacked of irony, since by now she had already married twice, with her father having annulled the first marriage for political reasons and the second ended by her brother Cesare, who ordered the death of her husband in August 1500.

7 Numerous inventories document these materials; see for example the dowry of Paula Da Noaria in Ferrara, 1517, ASFe, ANA, Matricola (M) 393, Antonio Descalzi, p. 1, f. 1518, "Dote Paula Da Noaria."

8 Prisciano drew the only extant plan of the city during Ercole's campaign to enlarge it between 1492 and 1505 (Zevi 1960: 148, 214).

9 Leonello's untimely death forestalled Alberti's plan to dedicate the treatise to him, since as any courtier knew, a deceased patron could no longer pay the bills.

10 The account of this and other festivities for Carnival in March 1561 were published in a booklet, *Il Monte di Feronia* (1562). Notably, the knights who attempted to conquer Gorgoferusa's castle appeared costumed as silver castles, emerging only when it was time to engage in combat; they battled knights disguised as silver ships. See also Marcigliano 2003: 45–50.

11 In a letter of 1485, Prisciani mentions discussing Alberti's manuscript with Ercole (Bertoni 1903: 66–7).

12 Prisciani described the arches in the last pages of his treatise, which he apparently did not complete and which ends abruptly in the middle of his discussion of the arches. (Barbagli 1992: 85–6).

13 The practice extended well beyond Italy by the middle of the century, with French kings erecting such triumphal arches, and when James I made his ceremonial entry into London in 1602, he was greeted by a triumphal arch topped by a miniature panorama of London.

14 Similar expenses for temporary architecture were not recorded for the entry of Renata of France; instead, ducal records document the exceptional cost of the fireworks and bombardments. ASMo, AE, CDE, Munizioni e Fabbriche, bb. 70 (1528), cc. 74–88, and 71 (1529), cc. 1–5.

15 The marriage of Ercole I's illegitimate daughter, Lucrezia d'Este, to Annibale Bentivoglio, ruler of Bologna, in 1487, was feted primarily in Bologna, the details of which were recorded in an anonymous description (*Narratione particolare delle nozze*).

16 The comments are from the letters of Giannozzo Pandolfini (ASFi).

17 The relevant financial registers are in ASMo, AE, CDE, Munizioni e Fabbriche (Armaments and Buildings), bb. 70 (1528) and 71 (1529). Since such structures usually took several weeks to erect, the costs would have appeared in the months before and after the entry.

18 Such was the case for Barbara of Austria and Alfonso II, according to Faustini (Sardi 1646: v.2, 41).

19 Ercole's mother, Ricciarda da Saluzzo, greeted Eleonora at the foot of Ercole's new staircase, which was replaced in 1478 by the one still there today. Eleonora welcomed her daughter-in-law Anna Sforza at the foot of this new marble staircase, but she was no longer alive when Lucrezia arrived in 1502. Isabella d'Este, eldest sister of Alfonso I, stood in for her deceased mother as the woman who welcomed the newcomer into the family home, just as her own sister-in-law, Elisabetta Gonzaga, Duchess of Urbino, greeted her at the foot of the palace stairs when she arrived in Mantua in 1490. Gregorovius notes the irony of Lucrezia also being greeted by four illegitimate Este women, one the daughter of Ercole, and three the daughters of his brother Sigismondo (Gregorovius 1874: 156; Tuohy 1996: 268; Pizzagalli 2001: 44).

20 ASFe, ASC, Serie Finanziarie, Secolo XVI, b. 17, f. 17, "Spese per la venuta di Lucrezia de' Medici;" f. 35, "Bagordo in occasione delle nozze del Duca Alfonso con la Duchessa Barbara d'Austria." For Lucrezia, the city got off lightly, having to spend only 300 lire because Alfonso reused those he had erected for his triumphal possession of the dukedom following his father's death; they only needed to add new inscriptions and decorations to four arches: in front of the Osteria della Campana, at the montagna, in front of the house of Conte Galeazzo Estense Tassoni, and in front of the house of Alfonsino d'Este. When Barbara of Austria arrived, the city's expenses amounted to several thousand lire marchesane, because now the arches had to be built ex novo: one on the Giovecca in front of the Osteria della Campana, another on via della Giara, and two at S. Giorgio, one of which was erected in the middle of the bridge.

21 The literature on the devolution of Ferrara to the papacy is extensive, for the removal of the family triggered another two centuries of debate and legal maneuverings (Masetti Zannini 2000).

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Abbreviations

ASCFe	Archivio Storico Comunale di Ferrara
ASFe	Archivio di Stato, Ferrara
ASFi	Archivio di Stato, Firenze
ASMa	Archivio di Stato, Mantova
ASMo	Archivio di Stato, Modena
BCA	Biblioteca Comunale Ariostea (Ferrara)
AE	Archivio Estense
AG	Archivio Gonzaga
ANA	Archivio Notarile Antico
ASC	Archivio Storico Comunale
CDE	Camera Ducale Estense

b	busta (folder)
f	fascicolo (file)
c	carta (manuscript page)
r	recto (front)
v	verso (back)

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4

Festivals of state

The scenography of power in late Renaissance and Baroque Venice

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Translated by Giovanna Fogli

The performance of public ceremonies and festivities was a central aspect of Venetian life during the Renaissance and Baroque ages. These performances took place in the public spaces of the city, which had been planned and modified through the centuries to respond to the requirements of such rituals. State ceremonies were an essential part of the life of the *Serenissima* and have, since ancient times, come to define the image of the city. Over the ages, Venetians have built and transformed their city, adapting to the needs of a complex civic ritual the city's irregular maze of land and water paths, and the articulated structure of its buildings and open spaces where ceremonies were held. Indeed, we cannot understand the development of Piazza San Marco and the smaller Piazzetta, their surrounding buildings and the San Marco basin with its banks and monuments, unless we take into consideration the way festivals regularly animated these spaces, attracting huge crowds. The fine-tuning of Venice's celebratory rituals and the building of the city proceeded in parallel, one adapted to the other.

This phenomenon became particularly important in the last three centuries of the thousand-year old Republic, particularly after its crushing defeat by the League of Cambrai at the Battle of Agnadello in 1509. From this moment on, Venice was progressively marginalized in the international scene and entered a political and institutional crisis. Once its decline appeared irreversible, the city entrusted the memory of its lost privileges and former greatness to the ephemeral, redundant ritual of state celebrations. Seeking to immortalize these events in descriptions, paintings and prints—intended primarily for the many foreigners that gathered for these occasions—Venice perpetuated and presented itself to the world through a carefully orchestrated myth. Thus, its festivities symbolized Venetian domination over the Adriatic Sea and the city's enlightened

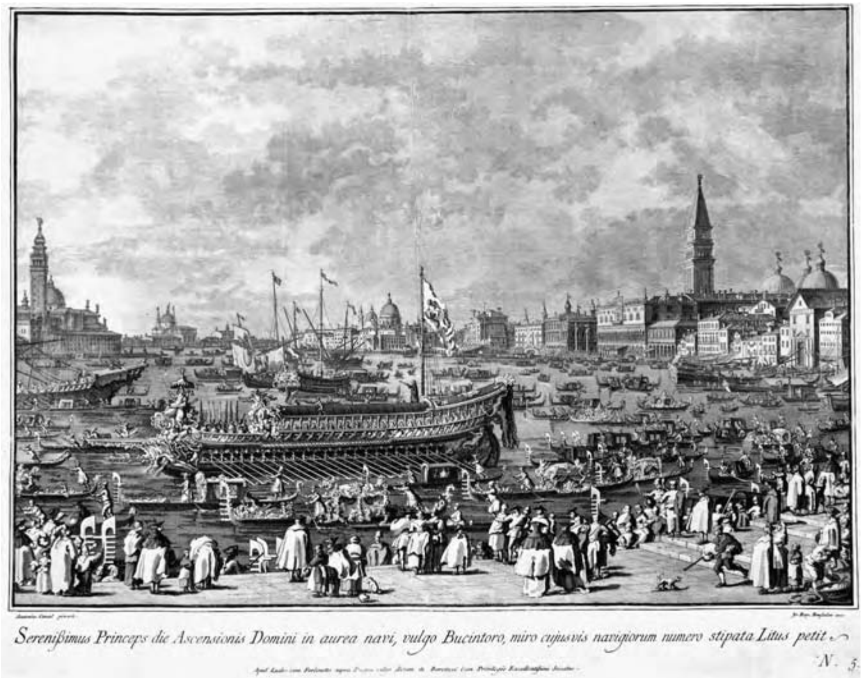

Figure 4.1 Departure of the doge on the *Bucintoro* with accompanying flotilla in San Marco basin, heading towards the Lido for the city's "Wedding to the Sea" ceremony on the Feast of the Ascension, *c.*1766. Etching by Giovanni Battista Brustolon after a drawing by Canaletto, in the series *Feste Ducali*, n. 5. Venice, Museo Correr, Inv. St Molin 1932.

government, its liberal institutions, and its balance between political and religious power. State festivals in Venice were also important occasions for different classes to meet, if only to a certain degree, and a time when, for once, social barriers were lowered and everyone together could praise the city's former greatness.

Most Venetian festivals took place outdoors as dynamic celebrations in which a great number of people moved from one side of the city to the other. Processions, parades or regattas followed precise itineraries that were articulated and marked by significant points along the way. These processions engaged, and at times altered, the city's urban structure—as in the case of the ephemeral boat bridges built on the Giudecca and Grand Canal, which allowed access to the Churches of *Il Redentore* and the *Madonna della Salute* on their respective feast days (Plate 4a and Figure 4.2). In this chapter, we will try to trace the parallel histories of Venetian state festivals and of the city that offered a stage for these festivities.

Figure 4.2 The annual visit of the doge to the votive church of Santa Maria della Salute, on November 21. Drawing by Antonio Canaletto, preparatory to the copperprint by Giovanni Battista Brustolon, for the series *Feste Ducali*, n. 8. Private collection (from Baetjer and Links 1989: 350–1, no. 123).

The myth of Venice: crafting and perpetuating the image of the lagoon city

There is an indissoluble bond between Venice and its festivals. Indeed, from the city's origins, civic ritual played a primary role in the life of the Serenissima. As official and unofficial historiography has abundantly stressed, over the course of time, ceremonial ritual in Venice grew and defined itself alongside the city's institutions as they, in turn, developed. It is difficult to even imagine Venice without the many flamboyant festivities that marked its calendar. Over the centuries, the city's established celebrations—for the most part of very ancient and legendary origin—have continually changed in response to current events and requirements of state. In the thirteenth century, Martin da Canal counted twelve important established annual festivals. At the end of the fifteenth century, Marin Sanudo listed twenty such events. A century later, Francesco Sansovino recalled fourteen processions in which the doge participated, while written records of such ceremonies recorded in book form identify sixteen of these celebrations during the same years. The *Andate Ducali* (ceremonies in which the doge participates) were more numerous, more than thirty, although the number changes from year to year and source to source.

The calendar of established festivals was continually revised, expanded and updated over time. From the fourteenth century onwards for example, jousts were prohibited and in 1379 the city formally canceled the extremely popular festival of the "Twelve Maries," which celebrated the Venetian victory over the Istrian pirate Gaiolo. In 1311, a walk to San Vito (San Vio) was instituted in memory of the successful suppression of conspiracy led by Baiamonte Tiepolo the previous year and a small *campo* (or piazza), one of the very few along the Grand Canal, was opened to allow the doge a direct path to the church. Similarly, in 1356, the procession of Sant'Isidoro (*San Sidro*) commemorated the defeat of Marin Faliero's conspiracy, which ended with the beheading of the traitorous doge and the institutionalization of the city's Council of Ten, responsible for security of the state. In 1572, a procession to the church of Santa Giustina was established to celebrate the recent victory over the Ottoman fleet at Lepanto. In 1577, the third Sunday in July was dedicated to the celebration of the Redeemer as a votive offering following the terrible plague, with festivities which lasted three days: the doge's procession was held on Sunday over a boat bridge specially erected to allow access to the Giudecca island, preceded by a secular celebration on Saturday night and followed on Monday by a popular fair on the Giudecca (where Palladio's Church of the Most Holy Redeemer [*Il Redentore*] was built shortly afterwards) (Plate 4a). The following year, the Visitation of San Rocco was instituted to ward off the danger of the plague. In later years, this was combined with an art show held on the grounds of the church of San Rocco. Numerous religious festivals in honor of saints were added to the official dogal celebrations, reaching a total of nearly a hundred festivals (Sansovino 1663: 492–526; Sanudo 1900–2: 86–91; Tramontin 1965: 275–327; Sanudo 1980: 59–62; Muir 1984: 116n, 261 and passim; Urban 1998).[1]

Additional festivities and celebrations were linked to occasional occurrences, such as the doge's funeral, which was followed eight days later by the election of a successor (who, once elected, was the center of another complicated public ritual). Any event was transformed into an occasion for celebration: the awarding of prestigious public offices of a political or religious nature—such as patriarch, prosecutor, great chancellor or general—to noble Venetians, the solemn arrival of a foreign ambassador, a military victory or any other international event in which Venice had either played a central role or in which it had somehow participated. In addition to these ceremonies, the official visits of distinguished foreign personalities were often an occasion for celebrations issued by the Republic. These festivities took place not only in the governmental center of the dogal palace, its surrounding buildings and open spaces, and along the Grand Canal with spectacular regattas, but they also extended to other urban areas—some of which, normally marginalized, were transformed with elaborate stage settings for these occasions. For example, in 1574 the Lido was decked with a series of triumphal temporary architectural structures designed by Andrea Palladio to salute Henri III of Valois who stopped in Venice en route from Poland to Paris where he was to be crowned king of France.

In January of 1782, the Office of State Visits organized celebrations for the reception of the "Dukes of the North" (the future Russian czar and his wife traveling incognito), and in May of the same year, for the visit of Pope Pius VI. In both cases, the Republic commissioned Francesco Guardi to record the occasion for posterity. We must also mention the galas and celebrations privately organized by distinguished citizens, for example Ernst August VI, the German duke of Brunswick-Luneburg, who in 1685 presented his Venetian and foreign guests with a memorable regatta on the Grand Canal (Alberti 1686). In addition to the many fixed and occasional official ceremonies and privately organized festivities, a series of popular events which involved the entire population also took place regularly over the course of the year. Among this last category of celebrations, carnival stands out, which in Venice (as elsewhere) combined history and myth, tradition and innovation, and represented an uninhibited moment that was open to all social classes, in which roles were reversed and everything, or almost everything, was allowed (Urban 1985).

In Venetian life, festivities were more than mere celebrations, they were events deeply ingrained in the city's history, traditions and urban structure. For the most part, as we have indicated, these were state celebrations: public displays in which history and legend, civil and religious society, political propaganda and social issues were deeply intertwined. Through them, the Republic presented itself to the outside world, upholding the "myth of Venice" that it had constructed, updated and transformed through the centuries. The evolution of state celebrations reached its peak after the defeat at Agnadello in 1509, an event that threatened the city's very survival, and after the tragic sack of Rome in 1527 by the undisciplined troops of the Holy Roman Empire, in which many previously held beliefs were lost. The Serenissima, able to recover only by radically changing its political and economic strategies, saw festivals as a way to present a specific, well-thought-out, and lasting image of itself to the rest of Europe, one which proposed the Venetian Republic as the direct heir to ancient and modern Rome at a time when it was so sorely tried. The image is of a happy Republic founded on the balance of different powers; on the practice of justice; on harmony among its three social classes of nobles, citizens and populace; and on its wealth and well-being derived from trade, commerce and management of public finances. In short, what is portrayed is an ideal State, albeit one increasingly at odds with its political reality (Fasoli 1958: 445–79; Gaeta 1961: 58–65, 1981: 565–641; Muir 1984: 17–35; Tafuri 1985; Bettagno 1997). This image was acknowledged on the one hand by the iconographic program developed in paintings and sculptures displayed outdoors and indoors at significant sites, especially in the complex around the church and plaza of San Marco, and on the other, it found its precise affirmation in state festivals. In the recurring choral representation of the Serenissima, the doge played the role of principal actor while the *Signoria* and the high magistrates performed alongside. The entire population was extra and audience at once, and the city provided the stage (Figure 4.3).

Figure 4.3 Joseph Heintz the Younger, Bird's eye view of Venice. Oil on canvas, mid-17th c. Venice, Museo Correr, inv. Cl.I, 2159.

Critical fortune of the festivals

Myriad primary sources, written and visual, in manuscript and in printed form, attest to the role played by ceremonial activities in Venice's political, economic and social life, and to their impact on the international scene. Archival documents in particular testify to the importance of these events and to the care involved in their planning. Among these sources, the Senate ceremonial books deserve special attention. The Senate included the doge, his advisors and three permanent committees of counsellors (*Savii*). One of the five "counsellors for mainland affairs" (*Savii di Terraferma*) saw to the planning of official ceremonial activities. From 1593 onwards, their ceremonial books record deeds and decrees relating to official ceremonies, including ones prior to 1593. They describe annual civil ceremonies and feast day celebrations, as well as special celebrations for military victories or to welcome distinguished personalities. All these events included the participation of members of the Senate (for a comprehensive look at the manuscripts that are available, see Urban 1998: 249; Hopkins 2000: 232–3.) Although these documents mention religious celebrations they do not offer liturgical details, since events under the jurisdiction of the canons of San Marco were recorded in the ceremonial books of the state church. Among the few of these that have survived are the *Rituum Ecclesiasticorum Cerimoniale*, written between 1559 and 1564 by Bartolomeo Bonifacio, who was the choirmaster in San Marco; and the *Cerimoniale Magnum* of Giambattista Pace, which exists in a number of manuscripts (Bonifacio n.d.; Pace 1678).

Two other ceremonial books of San Marco, from 1308 and 1564, have been recently published in whole or in part (Moore 1986; Marcon 1995). Ceremonies that involved the Republic's highest authorities were recorded in detail for the doge by the knight who was his master of ceremonies. One of these—available in two different manuscripts—is the document written in 1590 by Salustio Gnicchi, knight to Doge Pasquale Cicogna (Gnicchi 1590, ms; Trexler 1978, 18n, 19n). A wealth of information is also offered by the ceremonial book for the Feast of the Ascension (*Festa della Sensa*) (Battagia 1859; Trexler 1978: 18n, 19n; Muir 1984: 219, 237n.; Hopkins 2000: 232–3, 134–43).

Since ancient times, chronicles record the existence of festivities in Venice. We may follow the genesis, role and evolution of the city's ceremonies over the centuries in the works of authors such as Giovanni Diacono who wrote until 1008; Martin da Canal and the chronicler known as Marco in the thirteenth century, and in the fifteenth through eighteenth centuries, Marc'Antonio Sabellico, Marin Sanudo, Francesco Sansovino and Pietro Gradenigo, to mention only a few (Sansovino 1663: lib. XII, 492–526; Sanudo 1879–1903 and 1980; Giovanni Diacono 1986–8; Sabellico 1957; Palladin 1969–70: 429–61; da Canal 1972: app. III, II, 322–3; Gradenigo, *Notatori* and *Commemorali*; Muir 1984: 64, 219–20 and passim). City guides have also focused on festivals, since they have always interested travelers (Sansovino 1561; Azzi Visentini 1980; Casini 1997). We do not lack coeval representations of individual festivals, especially occasional ones. Some such accounts are manuscripts, others were prestigious printed editions lavishly illustrated, and yet others—as we will see—took the form of paintings commissioned either by those who were honored (such as foreign ambassadors) or by the authorities, to immortalize the event.

Over the years, scholars have shown increasing interest in Venetian festivities. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, Giustina Renier Michiel collected important testimonies regarding the origins of Venetian myths and festivals and to this day, her work remains a fundamental source on the subject. Pompeo Molmenti, in his cross section of Venetian life, habits and costumes, makes ample room for festivals, celebrations and entertainments, as does Giuseppe Tassini whose work focuses specifically on festivities (Renier Michiel 1817–27; Molmenti 1927–9, vol. I: 169–208, vol. II: 425–44, vol. III: 223–58, with rich iconography; Tassini 1863 and 1961). In 1937, Giulio Lorenzetti organized an exhibit on the subject in Ca'Rezzonico in Venice (Lorenzetti 1937). In 1961, Bianca Tamassia Mazzarotto completed an in-depth and detailed analysis of Venetian festivals, starting from a collection of 69 paintings on "the customs of the city" by the mediocre artist Gabriel Bella, who produced them around 1780 for the Giustinian family (Plate 4a). Of these paintings, 67 portray festivities and celebrations.[2] In 1984, Alvise Zorzi revisited Bella's series, which in the interval had been the subject of an exhibit and a related catalog entitled "The games of Venice" (*I giochi veneziani*) (Gambier *et al.* 1978; Zorzi 1984). Art historian Lina Urban has been researching Venetian festivals for over thirty-five years, presenting the public with many articles and books, while scholars such as Edward Muir and Matteo Casini, experts in the history of Venetian institutions, have concentrated on the ritual aspects of state ceremonies, making valuable contributions in this area (Urban see all; Muir 1984; Casini 1996 and 1997). And lastly, scholars who have observed the importance of festivals in Venetian art history have explored the influence of ceremonial practices on Venice's architecture and city planning (Hopkins 2000). We will discuss this in turn.

The doge and his attributes

The doge had the leading role in Venetian official ceremonies; he represented the Republic, or rather, he embodied it. As the personification of the Republic, his entrance on the scene was usually accompanied by dogal regalia (*trionfi ducali*). These symbols sanctioned his royal image, which was linked for the most part to a late-Roman, Byzantine concept of imperial power, and gave definition to the institutional prerogatives and the international role of the Serenissima. For the most part, the origins of the dogal regalia can be traced back to the gifts supposedly granted by Pope Alexander III to Doge Sebastiano Ziani in 1177, as a token of gratitude for Ziani's decisive role as a mediator during the dramatic confrontation between the pope and the German Emperor Frederick Barbarossa. The doge's mediation permitted a favorable conclusion to the conflict. The peace between the two opposing parties was sealed in Venice, when the emperor not only bowed to the pope but kissed his feet in the Church of San Marco, according to the thirteenth- and fourteenth-century official chroniclers who recorded this crucial event in the life of the Serenissima (Sansovino 1663: cap. XI, 467–91; Cecchetti 1864; da Mosto 1977: XI–LX; Finlay 1980: 109–62; Benzoni1982; Tenenti 1982; Franzoi 1986).

The sword donated by the pope "signified that the doges were true sons of the Mother Church, had defended her honor against the pride (*superbia*) of the emperor, and thus were endowed with a sense of true justice" (Muir 1981: 113). The most ancient insignia of the doge dated back to the ninth century when the Venetian *dux*, as the provincial representative of Constantinople, adopted the Byzantine title of *spatharius* (the sword) coupled with the scale. This insignia came to be identified with one of the most common images of the Republic—after the lion of San Marco—namely, the image of Venice as Justice. In reality, the sword offered "a double-edged symbolism": "as a papal gift to a prince who made peace and as epitome of a legal system that promoted equality before the law and social concord," and it was therefore a symbol that "accorded well with the Republic's design to present itself as harmonious" (Muir 1981: 114). The umbrella, symbol of regal deferential tribute, was presented to Alexander III and Frederick Barbarossa when they were welcomed triumphantly by the city of Ancona while traveling with the doge. On that occasion, the pope supposedly demanded that one be given to the doge as well, and since then, the umbrella "came to typify both Venice's independence from the German Empire and the Papacy" (Muir 1981: 115). The white candle, carried in the procession by the chaplain of the doge or an acolyte, represented "the true and pure faith of the Venetians," although its origin in dogal processions was said to be connected to an outrage against the Church committed by the Doge Vitale II Michiel (1156–72) or his successor Sebastiano Ziani (1172–8) involving the demolition of the chapel of San Geminiano in 1170 without papal approval, in order to enlarge the square of San Marco.

> For this neglect the pope anathematized the Doge and removed the anathema only when the Doge agreed to rebuild the church and to commit himself and his successors to an annual penitential visit to the new San Geminiano. At the processional visit each year the parish priest of San Geminiano [. . .], recalled the purpose of the visit, reminded the Doge of his obligation to return the following year, and gave him a candle to be used in all the ducal processions for the coming year. Through the introduction of the Alexander II legend, the candle, originally a symbol of penitence was deliberately transformed into an insigne of honor, privilege, and faith.
>
> (Muir 1981: 109–12)

According to a "characteristic transmutation," Sansovino relates that the candle represented the *patronia* of the doge over the church of San Marco (Muir 1981: 109–12). The silver trumpets that, together with the banners, had supposedly been donated by the pope to the doge as they were making their triumphal entrance in Ancona, recalled the ancient entrance ritual due to kings and emperors. The eight banners were of four different colors "white stood for peace, red for war, dark blue for a league, and violet for a truce: the current state of Venetian military affairs determined which color was carried first" (Muir 1981: 117).

Other attributes of dogal regality were the *faldistorio* (Venetian throne) and the foot-cushion, two of the seven *trionfi* that were not part of Alexander III's gifts and, like the sword, had been in use at least since the tenth century and whose origins can probably be traced to the insignias carried by the *dux* as a Byzantine official. During holy week processions, an esquire carried the *zoja* (coronation horn) on a golden tray, a horn richly covered by precious stones and different from the one habitually worn by the doge on official occasions. The horn changed many times over the history of the Republic—the last one was in use from 1555 (and depicted in Mattia Pagan's etching of a dogal procession on Palm Sunday), until its destruction by the French on Napoleon's 1797 occupation of the city and the fall of the Venetian Republic (Azzi Visentini 1991). And finally, we must mention the spousal ring donated by the pope to Ziani in acknowledgement of Venetian domination over the Adriatic Sea; this is the ring with which the doge married the Sea in the annual celebration we will later discuss.

Stories and legends linked to the dogal regalia are portrayed in many paintings found inside the doge's palace, works intended to further exalt the

Republic, its glorious past and its institutions (Wolters 1966, 1987, 2000). Yet between the sixteenth and the eighteenth centuries, the doge's real power diminished—as can be seen by a comparison of consecutive *promissioni ducali* (documents prepared *ad personam* that specified the duties and rights of the doge and by which each new doge swore to abide at the moment of his coronation)—and the doge found himself more and more "a prisoner in his own palace" because of the severe restrictions imposed on his personal liberty. As the doge's authority weakened, the celebratory emphasis around his figure grew. The number of ceremonies that saw his participation increased considerably, as did the display of wealth and luxury in all state festivities: in the mid-seventeenth century, there were thirty-six *andate ducali* (*Li trionfi et feste solenni* 1554; *Distinto ragguaglio* 1690; Musatti 1888).

Dogal processions

The doge never moved alone; he was usually accompanied by the Signoria. On solemn occasions, his entourage was a crowded procession which encompassed all social groups. Among thirteenth-century sources, Martin da Canal reports how during his lifetime an indistinct crowd would follow the doge, even though, after the "closing down" (*serrata*) of the Great Council (*Maggior Consiglio*) in 1279 and the definitive division between citizens (*cittadini*) and nobles, class distinctions acquired greater importance in the social and institutional hierarchies—that now coincided, since the most prestigious offices were reserved for the nobility. This phenomenon was reflected in the organization of processants by rank, so that each member took his position according to a precise ritual that reflected the increasingly oligarchic order of the Republic and its relation to the Church. The doge, the most prominent personality, was at the center of the procession and he was preceded first by citizens, lined up according to their class and status, and then by various government officials, from the lower ranks to the Grand Chancellor. The Patriarch, when he was present, preceded the Grand Chancellor; he in turn was preceded by the six Canons of San Marco and followed by the doge's personal chaplain. The Patriarch was the only high religious figure that took part in certain dogal processions, namely those held during Holy Week and other religious feast days. A prominent personality in the Serenissima, he participated as one of the Venetian nobility and not as a "foreign representative of the Church of Rome" (Muir 1981: 208).[3] The doge was followed in the procession by noble magistrates and lower office-holders in a descending hierarchy, dogal regalia and musicians being distributed throughout the procession. Movable stages (*soleri*) were placed to the sides of the parade to accommodate performances. The constant presence of citizens and the populace served to reassert the social harmony of the Serenissima, in spite of the strict hierarchical ranking of the procession. The complex and crowded dogal procession is well illustrated in a woodcut by Mattia Pagan from before 1561, which shows:

> The most illustrious Signoria . Sword . Ambassadors of various princes . Umbrella . The most serene Doge . Election boy . Grand Chancellor . Throne and Cushion . Chaplain . Secretaries of the Doge and Senate . Doge's Crown . White Candle . Patriarch of Venice . Canons of San Marco . Squires of the Doge . Knights of the Doge . High Chamberlains of the Treasury . Shawms and trombones . Retainers of the Ambassadors . Six long silver trumpets . Commanders with eight banners.[4]
>
> (Rosand and Muraro 1976: 89, 281–8; Azzi Visentini 1991: card 26, 278–80)

These visual representations of dogal processions allow us to see not only how the ritual of these celebrations evolved over the course of time, but also how the architectonical space that surrounded them changed. Therefore, we will reconsider them when presenting the history of these spaces.

> As a spectacular event, the ducal procession was an exaltation of color. The commandors [*comandatori*] who opened the parade wore deep blue mantles and red Greek berets adorned with golden medals emblazoned with the Lion of Saint Mark. They carried eight colored silk banners edged in gold: two white, two red, two dark blue and two violet. The esquires' garments were colored as well, while the fabric of the courtly chair, pillow and umbrella and vestments of the clergy were in gold. Trumpets, trombones and candelabrum were silver while senatorial togas were red. And every year, the Doge's costly vestments, as demanded by the conventions of the ritual, were regulated by a quasi-calendar that matched different fabrics and colors—ranging from crimson red to white, from gold to silver—to various celebrations and feast days. Fur collars also varied according to the occasion and, even though on a few solemn occasions the Doge was free to choose a particular type of fur, he was almost always required to wear ermine, zibeline or wolf [*lupo cerviero*].
>
> (Urban 1998: 185–6)[5]

The vivid pageant moved against an equally colorful backdrop, the square of San Marco with the glittering gold and polychromy of the dogal palace and the squares fully ornamented, and was accompanied by a continual musical background.

Construction of the San Marco complex from the twelfth to seventeenth centuries

Although all of Venice was a stage for public festivities (Figure 4.3), the preferred setting was the center of political power, the San Marco complex of buildings and open spaces (with its Grand Plaza, church and Piazzetta), and its hinge the dogal palace, where ceremonies began and ended. Because Venice's civic festivities evolved with the spaces in which they were held, the city core had been built with an attentive eye to the ritual that would be performed in it, and in turn, the ritual adapted itself to its designated areas; so that it eliminated the need to resort to temporary structures. Even more, the identification of urban areas with the festivals that took place in them transformed the city into such an ideal scenario, that it was utilized as a backdrop for paintings of celebrations, even when they had taken place elsewhere, as in the case of certain renowned canvases by Carpaccio and Gentile Bellini, particularly the Sant'Orsola cycle (Zorzi 1988).

We will now attempt to retrace (in synthesis) the key episodes in the realization of the San Marco complex, its facing basin and surrounding buildings, which were the main setting for state festivities. For the way they took shape over the course of the centuries, through the main phases of the political, architectonic and artistic history of Venice, these areas represent an extraordinary and eloquent metaphor for the Republic and its institutions. The main architectural styles—Roman-Byzantine, Gothic, early and late Renaissance, Baroque —are all represented at their peak, and can be seen in monuments that, although different from one another, are all fundamentally significant and suggestive. They illustrate the centuries-old history, and the glory, of the Serenissima, and coexist side by side as as pages of a book as significant panels of one of the many series of paintings or sculptures that decorate both the interior and the exterior of these buildings, the dogal palace in particular (Demus 1960; Lotz 1966: 114–22; Arslan 1970: 111–24, 195–202; Samonà 1970; Perocco and Salvadori 1973: 144–8; Olivato Puppi and Puppi 1977: 165–71, 208–14; Tafuri 1982b; McAndrew 1983: 91–116; Bellavitis and Romanelli 1985; Wolters 1987; Franzoi *et al.* 1990; Schulz 1992).

The original nucleus of what would later become the San Marco complex was the fortress of Rivoalto, the *dux*' residence, built on the lagoon around 814 at the time of the city's foundation by fugitives from the nearby city of Malamocco on the Adriatic Sea, which had proved to be geographically vulnerable to attack. Very little remains and even less is known of this early fortress, except that it was located in the present-day location of the dogal palace, that it had two or more towers and that on its north side there was a small church dedicated to St Theodore, the city's first patron. Shortly after 828, the church of San Teodoro was flanked by the church of San Marco, who had become the city's second patron, after two cunning Venetian merchants stole the evangelists from Alexandria in Egypt (or at least, this is how the story was told, showing the intertwining of history and legend in the myth of the city's genesis). In the previous year, a synod held in Mantua reasserted the supremacy of the ancient Roman town of Aquileia over the ecclesiastic jurisdiction of the Northern Adriatic Sea, sanctioning from the beginning the peculiar relation between political and religious power that was to characterize the entire history of Venice and that was reflected in its state festivals which asserted the independence of the young city from the exarchate of Aquileia, tightly connected to the Holy Roman Empire (Bettini 1978: 48–51, 91 etc.).

The first church of San Marco, begun in 829 and completed in 832, followed a longitudinal plan (like the neighboring church of St Theodore to which it was later annexed) and when the building was destroyed by a fire in 976, a new one was rebuilt along the original lines within two years. As Venice's international reputation grew, this church was replaced by a more monumental one, begun under Doge Domenico I Contarini (1043–71). The new building followed, rather revealingly, the Constantinopolitan model of the Justinian Age—namely a basilica dedicated to the twelve apostles, intended to host precious relics and emperors' burials, and reasserting the tight and privileged connection of the Republic with the Byzantine Empire. The plan of the central building in the form of an elongated Greek cross, covered by five hemispheric domes in brick and an interior completely decorated with mosaics on a golden backdrop, was admired by the Emperor Henry IV in the summer of 1095 and is essentially the same as the church we see today (although it was considerably embellished over the course of time, as we shall soon see). The church of San Marco was directly connected to the dogal palace and fell under the jurisdiction of the doge who nominated its *primicerio* (a prerogative that did not belong to the bishop of Venice, who was known as the Patriarch and resided in the Cathedral of San Pietro in Castello—and therefore did not pertain to the church of Rome). Since 1152, and possibly since the foundation of the current church a hundred years earlier, the estate of the church and the entire San Marco complex was administered by the *procuratoria*, which was the main office of the Republic after the doge and was composed of nine members. The administration of the estate and the supervision of the construction of the church and the San Marco complex was entrusted to three procurators called *de supra*. The other six members, three *de citra* and three *de ultra*, were appointed to the six neighborhoods (*sestieri*) in which the city was divided (Mueller 1977: 71 ff.). As the state church, San Marco played a key role in the civic ritual life of Venice: all significant events included it, the doge entered it in a solemn fashion more than thirty times a year and it was visited by all official guests of the Serenissima.

The original fortress was transformed into a palace around the middle of the thirteenth century, under Doge Vitale II Michiel or, according to different sources, under his successor, Sebastiano Ziani. It was remodeled and expanded to satisfy the growing needs of an ever more complex state machine, now dealing with city growth and international relations. A wing was added to the initial structure to serve as a hall of justice, and another one to house the assemblies of the city counsel. The ensemble was completed with porticoes on the ground floor and a great rectangular hall on the upper floor, following the usual pattern of Italian civic palaces. The long side of the building faced the lagoon while the short one looked on the Piazzetta, that had been created by filling the basin along the eastern side of the *castellum* to the newly completed bell tower (*campanile*), which served as defense post and lighthouse. On the lagoon side, the Piazzetta was delimited by two ancient and imposing granite columns of oriental origins, erected in 1173 by Niccolò Lombardo—later known as de' Barattieri—as an imposing triumphal entry for visitors approaching the civic centre from the basin. The columns were crowned with figures representing the two patron saints, the lion of Saint Mark and a statue (comprised of ancient elements) in which we can recognize Saint Theodore; these became known as the columns of *Marco* and *Todaro*. Nowadays, the palace no longer fronts directly on the water, even on its southern side towards the basin, since in the sixteenth century it was preceded by the *Molo*, a stone wharf that extends southwards. The Molo is 20 meters deep and rests on reclaimed land on the edge of the San Marco complex, extending on one side toward Castello and on the other toward the Grand Canal (spanning lateral canals with a series of bridges), and therefore functioning as a spectacular proscenium for ceremonies seen from the lagoon, greatly admired by contemporaries.

Under the same Doge Ziani, the length of San Marco square was almost tripled in size, from 60 to around 170 meters. To make room for the amplified square, the Batario canal which originally delineated its western side had to be filled with soil, and the ancient church of San Geminiano, which closed the square at the west, had to be demolished and rebuilt at the end of the newly enlarged plaza, which also annexed an old orchard under the jurisdiction of the Sisters of San Zaccaria. The dimension of the new San Marco square was unrivaled by any medieval, or even ancient, square in Italy, and recalled the ceremonial courtyards of late Roman, Byzantine and early medieval imperial palaces, as we will see.

At this time, the church of San Marco underwent extensive exterior renovations to respond to the enlarged dimension of the plaza. In particular, a U-shaped atrium was added to its front, articulated in five spans through a sequence of semi-circular arches. Crowning the central portal of Sant'Alipio was the famous classic bronze *quadriga* (four horsed imperial chariot), taken in 1204 from Constantinople during the fourth crusade, where it had towered over the large ceremonial square known as the hippodrome, of a size comparable to the new square of San Marco. Mixtilinear arches, spires and pinnacles gave San Marco's new façade soaring lines not present before, that were further accentuated by the renewed profile of the domes with their *extrados* woodwork, plated with lead foil and culminating in small spherical lanterns. To the side, the terracotta exterior walls were faced with marble slabs, mosaic decorations, sculptures and myriad classic *spolia* pillaged from the East (some of which were particularly significant, such as the late antique porphyry tetrarch group mounted in the southwest corner of the church, and the original pillars of San Giovanni D'Acri placed nearby), to highlight the city's identification with Byzantium, a good deal of which it conquered during the spoilage of Constantinople in 1204.

Around 1172, the city also began construction of a building designated to house the offices and living quarters of the *procuratoria* of San Marco. This building, most probably a brick structure, occupied almost the entire northern side of the square and presented on the ground floor a portico opened by an uninterrupted series of great arches, and, on the upper floor, a series of more narrow openings cambered on small columns (perhaps a loggia) that when necessary would turn into boxes for viewing ceremonies in the square.

A parapet walk and a crenellated balcony completed the top of the building. On the southern side of San Marco square, next to the bell tower, was the Orseolo hospice, assigned to welfare duties, while the western side of the Piazzetta was occupied by numerous shops and small buildings. This was the structure of the civic centre when, in July 1177, it was called to host the crucial reconciliatory meeting between Pope Alexander III and the Emperor Frederick Barbarossa. In the beginning of May, the pope arrived in Venice to make arrangements for the momentous occasion. On July 23, the Emperor Barbarossa, aboard Venetian vessels, was taken from Chioggia at the southern end of the lagoon to San Nicolò di Lido where, in the presence of four cardinals, he abjured the anti-pope he previously endorsed and recognized the authority of the Roman pontiff. Afterward, at the Lido, the doge welcomed the emperor on his parade boat and accompanied him to the Molo and then to San Marco where, on the threshold of the church, Barbarossa kneeled before the papal throne before attending mass inside the church and retiring to the dogal palace, as was reported by a German eye-witness in *De Pace Veneta Relatio*. This event was continuously evoked in subsequent iconography and ritual. At this time, reflecting Venice's international role and its dominion of the Adriatic, the ancient blessing of the sea (*benedictio maris*) ceremony was transformed into the much more meaningful blessing of the marriage between Venice and the sea, a theme we will discuss in turn.

In 1264 the vast L-shaped open space of the Piazza and the Piazzetta was paved with herringbone brickwork set within a stone gridwork. In 1723, this was in turn replaced by the present pattern designed by Andrea Tirali, made of trachyte from the Euganean Hills in the Veneto with inlays of Istrian stone. At this point, the square and the church of San Marco, the dogal palace and the Piazzetta comprised an artistically unified ensemble—even where the Piazzetta opens up to the pier and the lagoon, it is delimited by the two columns of Marco and Todaro that, because of their proportion and precise rhythm, divide and compose the empty space to offer a vast triple lancet window vaulted by the sky and unfolding to the water. In this admirable urbanistic complex, we are truly "inside" the last late-Roman *Palatium*, similar to Diocletian's palace in Spalato, Theodoric's in Ravenna, and the *basilei*'s in Constantinople or Charlemagne's in Aachen—palaces that contain the quarters of the prince-founder, a mausoleum or palatine chapel, and a great courtyard for courtly ceremonies (Bettini 1978: 48).

The ennoblement of the San Marco complex, which in the course of time acquired an ever-more official and representative role, continued with the progressive removal of commercial and manufacturing activities and the introduction of more relevant civic ones. In 1277, the Mint was transferred to a suitable building on the pier between the fish and meat markets, not far from its present location; while in 1310, the Arsenal of Terranova (which overlooked the basin of San Marco near the Orseolo hospice) was closed, following a 1302 decree that confined all naval activities to a swampy area in the northeast. Here, in 1326, a new arsenal was built. This change in city planning was completed by the construction of monumental public granaries in the San Marco area, austere late-Gothic constructions demolished by Napoleon in the early nineteenth century to make room for the royal gardens. The structure would soon be complemented on the pier front by a new civic palace, a masterpiece of Venetian Gothic begun in 1340 and extended in phases over a century and a half to its present state, with the addition of a courthouse, municipal building and dogal residence.

The first building phase of the government palace, supposedly designed and directed by Filippo Calendario, was completed facing the Molo in 1410. The upper floor, built over a continuous colonnade and loggia, contained a majestic hall for the Great Council which, following the *serrata* of 1297, had grown from its original 400 members to over a thousand. The building's exterior presents a solid wall lightened by a covering of Istrian stone and lozenges of red marble from Verona, creating a lively duotone effect. The wall is ornamented by six large windows and a prominent balcony in its center, made by Pierpaolo and Jacobello Dalle Masegne between 1400 and 1405, directly over the ceremonial entrance from the Molo. The structure was completed by a graceful Istrian stone molding.

In 1422, a new palace of justice (*Palacium ad jus reddendum*) was commissioned to replace the dilapidated Hall of Justice dating from Doge Ziani's time on the eastern side of the Piazzetta. The new building, intended as a counterpart to the government palace on the Molo, had a façade of comparable dimensions, with identical covering and a majestic Gothic balcony, resulting in a grandiose yet graceful L-shaped structure. Between 1438 and 1442, at the main entrance from the Piazzetta on its northern side, facing the side of the church of San Marco, Bartolomeo Bon and his studio completed the flowery Venetian Gothic *Porto della Carta* surmounted by a representation of Venice as Justice—this too, like everything else, was based on an iconographic program. At the end of the fifteenth century, the complex was completed with the construction of a third, eastern, wing facing the *rio di Palazzo*, former location of the dogal residence before its destruction by fire in 1483. The palace was immediately rebuilt in proto-Renaissance style by Antonio Rizzo (McAndrew 1983: 91–116) or, according to other sources, by Mauro Codussi (Huse and Wolters 1989: 38–42) who in 1498 sealed the courtyard with a majestic staircase that from then on hosted the crowning of the doge and offered a scenographic landing to the *via triumphalis* that began at the Piazzetta, and, from the southern side of the church of San Marco embellished with its *spolia*, continued to the *Porto della Carta* and the main entrance to the palace, through the central hall (*portego*) and the Foscari arch. When the construction was completed, the dogal palace formed an imposing U-shaped structure occupying three sides of a large internal courtyard closed off by the northern side of the church of San Marco. From the very beginning, the palace was identified with the city that it portrayed *tout court* in miniatures, drawings and views; so much so that in 1577, when the opportunity to restructure it in a more suitable late-sixteenth century style arose with the serious damage of its southern wing in a fire, it was decided that the building would be rebuilt exactly as it was, in spite of the contrary opinion of distinguished experts such as Andrea Palladio, who commented on its "defects and faults," and Vincenzo Scamozzi, who had criticized the granaries of Terranova and deemed the palace "considerably out of line and ugly" (Scamozzi 1615: parte I, 242–3, 176; Concina 1995: 231).

Shortly after the completion of the dogal palace, the restructuring of the square's northern side began. In 1496, it was decided to replace the clock that had been on San Marco's façade since 1384 and to situate the new one in a strategic position on a civic tower erected on the northern edge of the square, near the opening to the *Mercerie* street that led directly to the commercial center of Rialto. This opening had previously been marked by a passageway that included two arches of the colonnade of the ancient offices of the procurators of San Marco, visible in Gentile Bellini's *Processione in piazza* (Plate 4b). Offering itself as a "door" onto on the city's principal mercantile street, as seen from the "sea gate" created by the two columns on the Piazzetta, the triumphal arch attributed to Codussi definitively marks the visual axis tangent to the basilica; not only did it constitute the allegorical representation of the harmonious unification of land and sea, it also offered itself at the beginning of the line of *Procuratie* (residences of the procurators) built under Ziani, and interpreted the space of the square as a Latin forum (Tafuri 1980: 19).

The scenographic impact of this new urban axis, reflecting the Renaissance concept of the city promoted by Leon Battista Alberti (who also insisted on the tower's new role in the modern city as symbolic rather than defensive) was evident and immediately understood: Jacopo de' Barbari's exceptional bird's eye view of Venice from 1500 not only confirms the physical centrality of the Marciano complex, but also identifies a visual axis framed by the columns and ending at the tower and the commercial thoroughfare of the Mercerie, the true spine of mercantile Venice. The Piazzetta foregrounded by the Molo, framed by the columns of Marco and Todaro and closed off by the tower, became from then on the ideal background for ceremonies and official festivities, receptions of distinguished guests, and the bestowing of prestigious offices and public recognitions. Sebastiano Serlio was influenced by this setting in his famous drawing of the Uffizi and his restoration of the ancient theatrical scenes, comic and tragic, described by Vitruvius (Serlio 1545: ff. 49v, 50v). Soon after the completion of the new clock tower, a devastating fire destroyed the Procuratorie. Their rebuilding, said to have been immediately entrusted to Codussi, was most probably the work of Scarpagnino. Carried out between 1500 and 1532, it re-interpreted the plan of the ancient complex in the Renaissance style, with an uninterrupted series of semi-circular arches in the street level colonnade and a pair of windows on top of each arch, raising the buildings an additional floor; in place of the battlements of the medieval structure, these buildings presented an elegant coping of vases and antefixes.

Venetian architecture of the fifteenth and early sixteenth century referred to an antiquity mediated by the Orient, with which Venice always had privileged relations and on which it built its political and economic fortune. The situation radically changed in the sixteenth century, when, having weathered the crisis that followed the confrontation with the League of Cambrai, Venice remodeled its image shaping the myth that would present it as a new Rome. Only then did the city's architectonic model become that mature Renaissance style initiated in Rome by Bramante in the early fifteenth century, through the work of Jacopo Sansovino—an artist of Tuscan origins trained in Rome, which he left after the sack of 1527 to land in the lagoon. In 1537, Sansovino was given the task of restructuring the western side of the Piazza and the Piazzetta, including the new church of San Geminiano, the *Loggetta* (small loggia) of the bell tower and the *Libreria* (library), destined to host the rich collection of Greek codex donated to the Republic by Cardinal Bressanone in 1468. The library was connected on its seaward side to the new *Zecca* (mint), also designed by Sansovino. Of particular significance is the Loggetta set against the western side of the bell tower, which was now free of the buildings that had abutted its southern and western sides. Intended as a meeting point for the nobility, the small structure, embellished by a sculptural program also executed by Sansovino, became the western extremity of that triumphal axis that led through the Carta Gate, the colonnade and the Foscari arch to the palace courtyard and to the stairway where the doge was crowned. In 1588, the stairway acquired its name *dei Giganti* (of the giants) when monumental statues of Neptune and Mars were placed at its top (see Figure 4.5 for a later representation). These statues, also by Sansovino, referred to the two pillars of the city's greatness, navigation and commerce, glorifying the realm of the sea (*stato da mar*) and the realm of the land (*stato da terra*) precisely when its mastery of these two realms had become compromised in the international context. These Olympian divinities were also portrayed in de Barbari's city view. Critics have appropriately stressed the importance of the urban renovation accomplished under Sansovino's direction, and his success in establishing in the eyes of the world—even after the dramatic events that followed the conflict with the League of Cambrai—the image of Venice as a new Rome, an essential part of the myth wanted by and built around the Republic (Romanelli 1980: 89.92 and ff.)

The depictions of dogal processions allow us to trace over the course of time not only the evolution of Venetian rituals but of their settings, making these valuable documents for our understanding of both. A key example is Gentile Bellini's *Processione per la festa di San Marco*, painted in 1496 for the Scuola Grande of San Giovanni Evangelista, which shows a pageant that extends from the Porta della Carta, through Saint Mark's square, to the small square of the *Leoncini*, with the church of San Marco as its final destination. The procession continues around the edges of a still late-medieval square, showing on its northern side the old two story Procuratie framed by battlements, and on its southern side the Orseolo hospice set against the bell tower (Plate 4b) (Meyer zur Capellen 1985: 71–3; Fortini Brown 1988: 282–6; Nepi Scirè 1994). Mattia Pagan's woodcut of 1561 shows us the dogal processions against the uniform backdrop of the first two floors of Codussi's newly rebuilt Procuratie, with spectators looking down from the windows of the upper floor. The relic of the true cross is centered in the foreground under a golden canopy, surrounded by churchmen and religious brothers with the basilica of San Marco as backdrop, while the dogal procession is in the background to the right, with the doge under the umbrella, his other regalia (trumpets, sword, chair and foot cushion) hardly recognizable in the distance.

Of the many engravings depicting processions in the Piazza and in the Piazzetta, one in Giacomo Franco's book of 1610 on Venetian ceremonial costumes focuses on the articulated route of the crowded dogal procession that, under the shelter of a long tent set up for the occasion, starts at *Porta del Frumento* (Grain Gate) of the dogal palace and continues through the Piazzetta and Piazza (showing on the right the new Procuratie on the site of the old Orseolo Hospice and the now free standing bell tower), to arrive at the church of San Marco, where an orderly crowd looks on. A second procession is shown entering the square from the *Porta dell'Orologio* (Clock Gate) and, crossing the dogal procession, arriving at the main entrance of the church (Figure 4.4). The inscription explains:

> This is the most beautiful square of Saint Mark, through which the Most Serene Prince parades with the Signoria the solemn day of the Body of

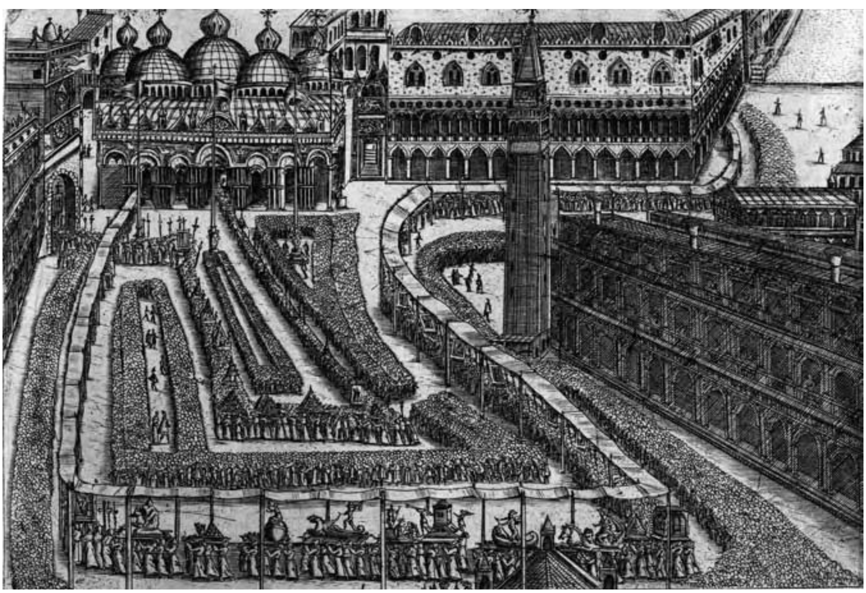

Figure 4.4 Procession in Piazza San Marco for the league against the Turks of 1571. Etching from Giacomo Franco, *Habiti d'huomini et donne venetiane*, Venice, 1610. Venice, Museo Correr.

> the Most Holy Christ, and, in other important occasions, of Peace or War, in which the Most Illustrious Monsignor the Patriarch participates, with the entire clergy, and all the Religions and the six Great Schools, holding, in the traditional order the Mysteries of our most holy religion, with the most precious golden and silver display.
>
> (Franco 1610)

Towards the middle of the sixteenth century, the architectonic renovations extended to the entire San Marco basin, long since included in the itineraries of state festivities and that, in the course of the century, would take on new functions corresponding to its renewed appearance. Around 1560, in a project destined to remain on paper, Alvise Cornaro engaged in a lively debate with Cristoforo Sabbadino on the layout of the lagoon, proposing the creation of two small islands to host a classical theater and a garden. The islands would have been built at the southern far side of the basin, possibly on each side of San Giorgio Island, site of a Benedictine monastery regularly visited by the doge; one island was to have been placed towards the Lido and the other towards Giudecca, at the two extremities of an isosceles triangle whose vertex would have been in the Piazzetta, marked by a fountain (Tafuri 1982a: 9–27). When, following a decision of the Council of Trent ratified by the Serenissima in July 1564, it was decided to restore the church of San Giorgio Maggiore, the commission was entrusted to Andrea Palladio who decided to rotate the edifice almost ninety degrees and free it from the squalid buildings that surrounded it. In this way, its imposing façade of Istrian stone, based on the double overlaid pronaos and preceded by a large square, would look towards the Molo. Thus aligned with the Piazzetta, the church of San Giorgio on the southern extremity of the basin became an essential part of the scene. Fittingly so, since for quite some time, it had been a destination for one of the doge's annual triumphal processions: the vigil of Saint Stephen, held on the evening of Christmas Day (Urban 1998: 105–10).

In the wake of the new San Giorgio, the votive churches *Il Redentore* and the *Santa Maria della Salute* were built by Palladio and Baldassare Longhena respectively, after the plagues of 1576 and 1630. Both were sited on the water's edge: the first looking on the Giudecca Canal, the second on the Grand Canal, sites chosen among a number of alternatives. Both monuments, well visible from the Molo, are stone buildings on high foundations, fronted by staircases and crowned by domes and steeples, and both became noticeable elements that contributed to the ennoblement of the enlarged San Marco basin and symbols of the city's triumph over death. *Il Redentore*, presenting a longitudinal plan as required by the Council of Trent, features a façade with the characteristic Palladian motif of a double overlaid pronaos (Plate 4a). *La Salute*, by contrast, is a vast complex on an octagonal plan with radial ambulatory chapels linked to the dome by external butresses masked by gigantic volutes, in a precocious and extremely original masterpiece of Venetian Baroque (Figure 4.2). Both churches were built by the Senate for the solemn pilgrimages the doge and the entire Signoria vowed to perform annually on the third Sunday in July and November 21, with processions that required long floating boat bridges to be built each year. In both churches, preceding the deep choirs reserved to the clergy behind the main altar, we find presbyteries expanded crosswise and surrounded at the sides by semicircles where tribunes were positioned (Hopkins 2000). In a final touch, the tip of the maritime customs house (*dogana da mar*), rebuilt in Baroque style around 1670 by Giuseppe Benoni, replaced the simple tower depicted by de Barbari with one surmounted by a golden globe supported by two atlases, marking the vertex of the triangular spit that separates the Grand and Giudecca Canals where they merge in the San Marco basin, offering a miniature preview of the nearby bulk of *La Salute*. Enlarged and renewed in this way, the urban scene becomes a theater of ever more spectacular enactments on the land and on the water.

Water festivals: the Bucintoro and other parade vessels

Festival processions took place along itineraries over land and water, sometimes spanned by picturesque boat bridges such as those erected to reach *Il Redentore* and *La Salute* on their feast days (Figure 4.4), and other times by the most imaginative parade boats of different colors and shapes: *bissone*, *peatone*, gala *gondolas* and many others that constituted an essential component of Venetian festivities (Romanelli and Pedrocco 1980). The queen of all Venetian watercraft is, of course, the dogal vessel, a large oar-propelled vessel called the *Bucintoro*, a name whose etymological origins are obscure, perhaps derived from *buzo*, a type of boat still used in Venice today (Urban 1998: 187–93).[6] In 1311, it was decided that the Bucintoro would be built at state expense and that the large vessel would be kept in a dockyard especially prepared inside the renewed arsenal. It was rebuilt in 1328, and again in 1462—the one was depicted without its decorations inside the arsenal by Jacopo de' Barbari in 1500 and, in all its festive splendor, in a miniature around 1522 commemorating the meeting between Doge Ziani and Alexander III (*Cronaca* 1522; Urban 1968: 321, n. 143). In 1526, Doge Andrea Gritti unveiled another Bucintoro, which was a model for two subsequent ones in structure and dimensions: an oar-propelled vessel with one mast and two decks, the second deck partially covered by a barrel-vaulted canopy (*tiemo*), and on its bow, between two elaborate rams, a gilt wooden statue of Venice as Justice, the only remaining fragment recently restored and preserved in the city's Naval Museum (Bettagno 1997, 359–60; Rossi 1997). In 1601, Doge Marino Grimani commissioned a new Bucintoro, built under the supervision of Marco Antonio Memmo and unveiled in 1606 by the newly elected Doge Leonardo Donà. This Bucintoro, of which we have many depictions and two small models, presented even more carvings and bas-reliefs than the previous one: entirely golden, decorated with statues of Mars and Justice, two lions, the dogal throne, eight *telamons* (sculpted pilasters, with the upper part in the form of a man) and forty smaller columns, it was the work of Marcantonio and Agostino Vanini, sculptors from Bassano. The final

Bucintoro, commissioned in 1722, made its first official appearance during the feast of the Ascension in 1728, when it was still covered by the red *bolo*, a base paint for its subsequent gold-plating which was completed the following year—when an accurate description of the vessel was published by Anton Maria Luchini (Luchini 1729). Designed by the naval engineer Stefano Conti, this Bucintoro was 100 Venetian feet long from stern to bow and 21 feet wide. Again double-decked, its lower deck was reserved for 160 oarsmen and 40 sailors, and its upper deck covered by a canopy that extended over 200 people: the doge, Signoria and Senate, ambassadors and other public figures, and musicians from the dogal chapel. The vessel was decorated with paintings, tapestry and precious drapery, in harmony with the sumptuous attire of its passengers. Its spectacular sculptural program was carried out in five years by numerous Venetian ateliers under the direction of the sculptor Antonio Corradini, who may also have been responsible for the boat's complex iconographic program involving an allegory of the Republic dominated by a group representing Peace bowing to Venice as Justice (Semenzato 1966: 44, 111–12; Zorzi 1972: vol. I, 62–8; Urban 1988, 1990,1998: 187–93; Cogo 1998: 88–96;). This Bucintoro made a profound impression on the young Johann Wolfgang von Goethe when he saw it in the arsenal in October 1786, describing it as "a parade galley,"

> The ship itself is a decoration and therefore it can't be overly decorated; it is in itself a golden carving, and on the other hand, it is of no practical use; it is a true ostentation to show the people their Princes in all their magnificence
>
> (Goethe 1965: 126)

A small model of the last bucintoro is preserved in the Borromeo Palace in Isola Bella, on the Lake Maggiore.

The festival della Sensa

The most spectacular and significant of Venetian festivals and the apex of the state liturgy, was without a doubt the celebration of the Marriage of the Sea, also called the *Sensa* festival since it took place on the feast of the Ascension (Figure 4.1). The celebration derived from the elaboration of historical fact, the reclamation of territory and Venetian legend, to sanction Venetian supremacy of the Adriatic Sea (Urban 1968; Muir 1984: 135–47; Urban 1998: 89–96). The celebration developed gradually over time. Its can be traced back to around the year 1000 when, possibly on Ascension Day, Doge Pietro II Orseolo left for a expedition to Istria and Dalmatia that established a Venetian Protectorate over these regions, and it is described in his chronicle by Giovanni Deacon, his chaplain and right-hand man. Orseolo, clearly remembering rituals performed at the court of Constantinople, introduced the custom of military banners depicting the patron saints and demanded that, immediately following the acclamation of the Byzantine emperor during liturgical rituals, lauds be sung to the Venetian doge by his new subjects. He also introduced the annual ritual of the blessing of the sea, bestowed by the bishop of Castello[7] in the presence of the doge, a ceremony probably derived from the ancient propitiatory spring ritual mentioned by Constantine VII Porfirogenitus in his book on Byzantine courtly ceremonies.

After the wedding ring was donated in 1177 by Alexander III (who thus agreed to the marriage of Venice and the sea) and the city's conquest of Constantinople in 1204, the ceremony become more complex, transforming the simple blessing of the sea (*benediction*) into a blessing of the marriage between Venice and the sea (*desponsatio maris*) in a clear expression of its new dominance. As a result, the ritual details of the ceremony and their meaning underwent a slow and careful elaboration. References to it are found in Martin da Canal's *Estoires de Venise* and in an ancient text on the liturgical rituals of Saint Nicholas di Lido, both dating from around 1275. However, the final version of the legend and a complete description of the ritual is found only in a short poem written in 1381 by Pietro de' Natali, bishop of Equilio, celebrating the peace of Venice and the gift of Alexander III. In the mid-eleventh century, this ceremony acquired a new significance through the newly established veneration of Saint Nicholas, whose church is on the Lido where the procession began (Corner 1749, XII: 104–6; Zenatti 1905: 105–26; da Canal 1972: 251). As a result, these nuptials became a political metaphor charged with subtle and signifcant implications. First, Venice personified by the doge was the groom, while the Adriatic Sea was the bride who, according to Venetian law, was legally subjected to her husband, who was her master and administrator of her dowry. The pope, approving the marriage with his blessing, guaranteed that the Church would look with favor on the maritime politics of the Serenissima, so that the ceremony could be regarded as a quasi-feudal investiture (Battagia 1859; Muir 1984: 144–7).

Let us now focus on the portion of the ritual that took place on water, aboard the Bucintoro and the Patriarch's ship, followed by myriad galleys, brigs, vessels, *peotes* and gondolas. On the eve of the Ascension, the Bucintoro departed the arsenal for the Molo in front of the dogal palace, where it was connected to the bank by an elegant landing. At nine o'clock the next morning, the doge's knight officially initiated the ceremony, having assessed weather conditions and collected the wedding ring from the *Officiali alle Rason Vecchie* who guarded it. The doge, after a mass in St Marco, exited the dogal palace through the *Porta della Carta* or *del Frumento* with banners and an entourage of state dignitaries and foreign ambassadors when, after receiving his people's tribute, he boarded the vessel. Oarsmen and sailors in place, the Bucintoro headed for the Lido harbor. As the dogal craft approached the vicinity of Sant'Elena, the Patriarch joined the parade in his flat-bottomed boat and, approaching the Lido, blessed the Sea repeating the ritual formula three times, "*Ut hoc mare nobis et omnibus in eo navigantibus tranquillum et quietum concedere digneris te rogamus, audi nos*" (Grant that this sea be tranquil and quiet for our men and all others who sail upon it, O hear us), in response to the supplication sung by two canons, "*Exaudi nos, Domine, cum propiciis*" (Hear us with favor, O Lord). The *Oremus* (Let us pray) followed, invoking God's protection for the doge, the Republic and the sailors.

After the benediction, the second part of the ritual, the *desponsatio*, began. In this, the Patriarch, circling the Bucintoro with his boat or boarding it, blessed the doge with an olive branch. When the vessel passed the mouth of the harbor of San Nicolò guarded by its two forts and entered the Adriatic, the Patriarch poured holy water into the sea while the doge threw in the wedding ring pronouncing, "*Desponsamus te Mare, in signum veri perpetuique dominii*" (We wed thee, O sea, as a sign of true and perpetual dominion). Cannon shot and artillery from the two forts paid tribute to Bucintoro at the Lido. On its return the parade stopped for a religious ceremony at the church of San Nicolò, where the relics of the patron saint of seagoers had been kept since 1100 when they were taken from Lycia in Byzantium by Venetians returning from the first crusade. There, the doge and the Patriarch parted company, the Patriarch remaining at the monastery to dine with the monks, while the doge returned to Piazza San Marco for the fair of the Sensa and an official banquet. In fact, there were two banquets organized for this occasion: the first with the members of the Signoria, foreign ambassadors, and the doge; and the second for those responsible for the Bucintoro, admirals, *proti* and *arsenalotti*—all together a hundred people spread over ten tables. Admirals and *proti* were received by the doge after the feast.

Fundamentally a springtime fertility ritual, but ceremonial journey as well along the processional axis from San Marco to the open sea, the Sensa was in this sense especially geared towards foreign visitors who flocked to it in great numbers. Muir interprets the Sensa festival as "a ritual voyage, a miniature expedition abroad" (Muir 1981: 132). Perhaps to take advantage of foreign visitors to the city—who also came for the indulgences that were dispensed to anyone visiting the basilica of San Marco from the eve of the festival through the following week (another consequence of Alexander III's gift)—a two week fair paralleling the event was held in the square of San Marco. The original shacks (depicted in paintings by Francesco Guardi) had become a point of conflict among the vendors who quarreled for the best ones to the point of rioting, to the dismay of the procurators *de supra* in 1689. In 1776, the shacks were replaced by an elegant string of demountable wooden shops that were far more dignified and functional when arrayed as an amphitheater opening up on two fronts, following a design by Bernardino Maccaruzzi (Urban 1968: 345 ff.; Brusatin 1980: 214–16, 253n). The Sensa festival also inaugurated the theatrical season which lasted until July, offering foreigners yet another reason to visit.

Regattas on the Grand Canal

Regattas played a special role in Venetian festivals.[8] First mentioned in the early fourteenth century as nautical contests between large and sturdy row boats, during the Baroque era, regattas evolved into phantasmagoric parades of many crafts of different style and dimensions which were for the most part lightweight and elegantly decorated. Water parades were organized both as complements to festivals and as events in their own right, to glorify an important personage and, with the specific intention of dazzling the public, through a combination of the ancient regatta and traditional water shows that had been promoted since the early sixteenth century by the *Compagnie della Calza* (Fellowships of the Stocking).

As the regatta's function and meaning changed, its route did as well. At first, they began at the Lido and ended at the maritime customs house, but they gradually moved to more urbanized and central areas, for example leading from Saint Anthony's in Castello all the way to the Church of Santa Chiara, crossing the Basin along the *Riva degli Schiavoni* and descending the entire Grand Canal. Their regulation also evolved: while at the beginning the state attempted to keep private parties from investing in these events in order to avoid irresponsible financial competitions, over the course of time, individual patricians were allowed not only to promote but also to participate in organizing the events, financing boat decorations or other elements. Regattas offered an occasion to dress the already extraordinary parade of palaces overlooking the Grand Canal with ornamental ephemera: drapes, tapestry, and even mirrors and paintings as owners competed in luxury and elegance. Artists called to embellish the many crafts would let their imagination run free, creating evermore dazzling and complex decorations, charged with allegorical references and often changing in the course of the event to follow iconographical programs that honored the personage being celebrated or the artist's patron. The climatic moment of such regattas occurred when the ostentatious floating edifice, hosting either the competition judges or the guests of honor, was placed at the bend in the canal between the Foscari and Balbi palaces. Such vessels were modelled after palaces, triumphal arches or even more naturalistic depictions such as caves or mountains. In short, regattas were theatrical performances on water offering chroniclers and artists an opportunity to compete in immortalizing these events, as we can see in the rich written and iconographic documentation that remains.

The first spectacular modern regatta was the one offered in 1641 by Giovanni Pesaro to celebrate his appointment to the office of procurator of San Marco. This procession began at Saint Anthony's Point and continued to Santa Croce, where it swung around to end at Ca'Pesaro, the residence of its guest of honor. The present-day parade route is much the same, except it now continues on to Ca'Foscari at the canal bend. Other dazzling (and better documented) regattas include the one offered by the Duke of Brunswick in 1686, chronicled by Coronelli in an elegant folio edition featuring reproductions of all the splendidly decorated boats; the one held for the Grand Duke of Tuscany Ferdinand III in 1688; and that for Frederick IV of Denmark and Norway, guest of the Serenissima *incognito* as Count of Oldenburg, which took place during the carnival of 1709. In 1716, the regatta held for the Prince Elector of Saxony Frederick August included a sumptuous *peota* with a reproduction of Asia carrying China—this was portrayed by Carlevarijs (Plate 4c) and also by Andrea Zucchi in an engraving based on a drawing by Alessandro Mauro. Other regattas honored the Crown Prince of Poland in 1740, the Duke of York in 1764, the Emperor Joseph II in 1775, the "Dukes of the North" in 1782, and Gustav III of Sweden in 1785 (Franco 1610; Coronelli 1686; Sartorio 1688; Florio 1740; Toscan 1775; Renier Michiel 1817; Giacchetti 1840; Anonimo 1890; Reale 1994: 231; Garbero Zorzi 2007).

Depictions of festivals

By now we have seen the indissoluble bond between Venice and its festivals. The city is a place for festivals; it is a festival: Venice identified with this key image and it wished to project this conjuncture, especially in the Baroque era. The huge interest prompted by a celebrating Venice among a larger public, particularly a foreign one, is evident from the many guides and travel journals that described festivals and the superb, and supernumerous, pictorial and graphic works that depicted them. At times, prints and paintings were intended for the more sophisticated "tourists" visiting the city, while on other occasions such works were commissioned by those who were being honored. More rarely, Venetian authorities requested pictorial commemoration of a celebration for its own purposes. In the following pages, we will mention a few works and pictorial cycles, providing sources for further study (although a comprehensive catalog of Venetian festival iconography is not yet available).

The memory of the solemn celebrations held in honor of Henry III of Valois was recorded in many paintings and prints. The future king of France, *en route* from Poland to Paris for his coronation, was received in Venice with a sumptuous celebration that included ephemeral architecture designed by Palladio, including a triumphal entrance for the future king in the form of a three fornix arch and a loggia with ten Corinthian columns built on the Lido near the church of Saint Nicholas (della Croce 1574; Sansovino 1581: 164; De Nolhac and Solerti 1890; Ivanoff 1972; Puppi 1973: 407–8; Benzoni 1989: 79–112). In the second half of the sixteenth century, the triumphal entries of several dogal brides (*Dogaresse*) made a great impression. Some of the more magnificant were the celebrations for Zili Dandolo, Lorenzo Priuli's wife, in 1556; and the four-day festival for Morosina Morosini, Marino Grimani's wife, in 1597, for which Vincenzo Scamozzi designed the famous Argonaut colonnade, better known as the floating "world theater" (Plate 4d). This last festivity was so lavish as to provoke a public outrage resulting in a decree that prohibited further celebrations in honor of a dogaressa—a rule that was largely adhered to in following centuries (Marcello 1597; Rota 1597; Molmenti 1884; Urban 1998: 210–15; Hopkins and Pellegriti 2003: 377–81).

In the mid-seventeenth century, we see two large canvases ascribed to the studio of Joseph Heintz, depicting the "Marriage of the Sea" and "Conferring the baton of command on the Admiral of the Sea." The first painting depicts the style and decorations of the boats in detail, showing the seventeenth century Bucintoro, the Patriarch's *peatone* and numerous private vessels with a vitality and precision that is shared by the costumes and gestures of the many participants looking on as the Patriarch pours holy water and the doge tosses the ring into the Adriatic Sea. The second painting is equally careful to show doge and admiral taking their leave from each other, followed by the procession exiting the church. The scene is set against the spectacular urban background of the Molo and Piazzetta animated by a host of people gathering in the foreground near their boats, or looking on from their terraces, loggias and windows (Natale 1978: 132–5, nn. 95–6; Azzi Visentini 1991: 280–2).

Venice's ability to magnify glory in the eyes of the world with ever more opulent celebrations—even in the face of its political decline—influenced its reception of foreign guests, princes, ruling monarchs and ambassadors. Thus we see an increasing presence of foreign dignataries in the ceremonial books from the end of the sixteenth century (Casini 1997: 107). It is not surprising that the interested parties wished to immortalize their spectacular Venetian receptions, entrusting such commemorations to well-known artists. Luca Carlevarijs painted the arrival at the dogal palace of French ambassadors M. de Charmont (1703), Henri-Charles Arnauld, abbot of Pompone (1706), and Jacques-Vincent Lanquet, Count of Gergy (1726). He also portrayed the British ambassador Lord Manchester (1707) and the Imperial ambassador Count Colloredo-Waldsee (1726). Waldsee's successor as Imperial ambassador, Count Giuseppe Bolagnos, commissioned the painting of his solemn entry to Antonio Canaletto, who depicted the event and a pendant portraying the Sensa festival in two very large canvases. The Count of Gergy in turn, who remained in office until 1732, may have become dissatisfied with his painting from the now-aging Carlevarijs —or perhaps he was competing with the ambassador of Charles VI, when he commissioned a new painting of his Venetian arrival by the rising star Canaletto, who produced two works of suitably vast dimensions. Carlevarijs also painted the festivities and regattas organized in1709 for Frederick IV of Denmark, and those of 1716 for Frederick August, Prince Elector of Saxony and later, king of Poland (Plates 4e and 4c). Venetian high magistrates and prelates also demanded painterly immortality: Michele Marieschi portrayed the solemn arrival of Patriarch Francesco Antonio Correr in 1735 (Zampetti 1982: 59–60; Succi 1983: 59–90; Mariuz 1994: 49–53; Reale 1994: 107–14).

But the artistic endeavor that best conveys buyers', entrepreneurs' and artists' interest in such celebrations is the exceptional cycle depicting dogal festivities (*Solennità Dogali*) dating from 1766, comprised twelve large copper engravings. It is likely that these were created to celebrate the dogal election of Alvise IV Giovanni Mocenigo on April 19, 1763. They were engraved by Giovanni Battista Brustolon from drawings by Canaletto, and were described by Giovanni Maria Sasso as being "as beautiful as paintings."[9] The prints present a selection of the principal public ceremonies attended by the doge, many of which we have already discussed.[10] Four of them refer to the crowning ceremony: *The presentation of the Doge in the Basilica San Marco*, *Carrying of* *the Doge on the Pozzetto in Piazza San Marco*, *Crowning of the Doge on the Scala dei Giganti* (Figure 4.5) and *The Doge gives thanks to the Great Council*. Two prints portray the festival della Sensa: *The Doge leaves on the Bucintoro for the Marriage of the Sea* (Figure 4.1) and *The Doge stops at Saint Nicholas with the Bucintoro*. Four other prints illustrate annual festivals: *The Doge attends the Lenten Thursday* festival, *The Doge's visit to the church of La Salute* (see Figure 4.4 for Canaletto's drawing), the *Corpus Domini procession* and the *Doge's visit to Saint Zacharias*. The final two prints in the cycle portray festivities inside the dogal palace: *The Doge receives foreign ambassadors in the Collegio Hall* and the *Doge's Banquet*. These twelve ducal festivities were reproduced by Francesco Guardi in the same number of paintings, as a free interpretation of the printed *Solennità* (although it is not out of the question that the artist may have had access to Canaletto's drawings, which were kept for many years at Ludovico Furlanetto's print shop) (Pignatti 1972 and 1975; Azzi Visentini 1991: n. 134–8, pp. 296–9; 1993: 174–89).

Guardi is also author of a beautiful series of six canvases depicting many episodes from the Venetian visit of the "Dukes of the North" (the future Czar

Figure 4.5 Coronation of the newly elected doge on the *Scala dei Giganti* in the courtyard of the dogal palace, *c.*1766. Etching by Giovanni Battista Brustolon after a drawing by Canaletto, in the series *Feste Ducali*, n. 3, Venice, Museo Correr, Inv. St Molin 1004.

Paul I and his wife, Maria Teodorovna of Wurttemberg, who preferred to travel incognito) in 1782. The visit was organized in every detail by the Serenissima which, several months earlier, had appointed a committee to coordinate the celebrations and invested a considerable amount of money in the hope of establishing profitable commercial relations with the great Eastern power. The official festivities started on January 18 with a gala at the casino of the Philharmonic, followed by a performance of *Arbace* by Borghi at San Beneto Theater, which was followed by a formal dinner and ball. On January 24, a regatta and a bull chase offered a flamboyant conclusion to the celebrations, both held in Piazza San Marco, which was transformed for the occasion into a vast, elegant arena with triumphal arches, boxes and other ephemeral architecture to support a complex celebratory program that exalted the guests and the Republic that welcomed them.[11] The exquisite elegance of the ephemeral architecture and the embellishments was meant to impress the guest but also to promote other cultural and artistic exchanges between the two countries. It was, indeed, another self-promoting effort. Now more then ever vigilant about its own image, the Serenissima carefully planned the dissemination of the memory of those events through detailed printed descriptions and myriad prints, including six sheets by Domenico Fossati and Giacomo Leonardis, in addition to the paintings by Francesco Guardi already mentioned (Mutinelli 1841: 648–9; Pilot 1914; Biadene 1992: 100–3; Azzi Visentini 1993: 177–97; Wilton and Bignamini 1996: 179–81, 189–92).

Guardi also painted four canvases reproducing the pastoral visit of Pope Pius VI who passed through Venice in 1782 on his return from a sensitive mission in Vienna, where he had unsuccessfully attempted to soften the impact on the Catholic church of the Edict of Tolerance promulgated the year previous by the Emperor Joseph II. Pius VI, who during his stay in Venice was lodged at the Dominican monastery of Saint John and Saint Paul, was the first pope to visit the city since Alexander III in 1177. To commemorate this significant occasion, the Serenissima assigned the direction of the ceremony to Pietro Edwards, Inspector of Fine Arts, and the task of immortalizing it to the paint brush of Francesco Guardi and the pen of Formaleoni and others. Guardi's canvases portray "The arrival of his Holiness in San Giorgio in Algo and encounter with the Most Serene Doge"; the "Pontifical Mass in the church of the Saints John and Paul"; "His Holiness as he descends from the throne to meet the Most Serene Doge in his last visit"; and "The blessing of the people in the decorated loggia at the School of San Marco" (Figure 4.6).[12] All the paintings were destined for a room in the dogal palace, from where they were probably taken shortly after the fall of the Republic (Formaleoni 1782; Azzi Visentini 1993: 180–1, 194–7). Numerous reproductions and drafts remain. It is likely that the Piazza San Marco was chosen for the papal blessing because the square was still occupied by the demountable wooden shops errected for the festival *della Sensa* and because the pope was lodged in the nearby convent. On that occasion, a conspicuous ephemeral stage designed by Antonio Codognato was built facing the school's façade. This platform, featuring

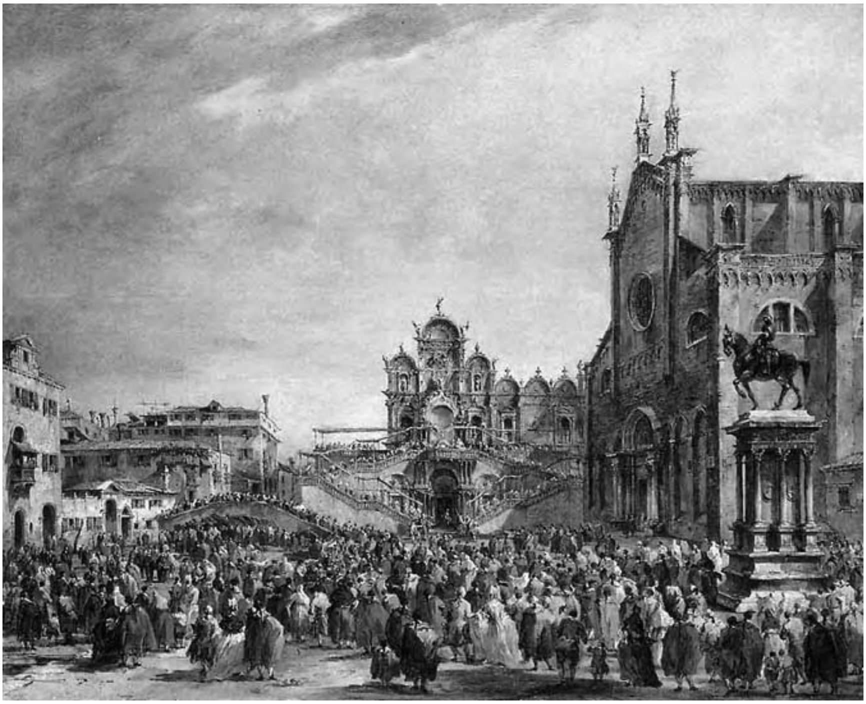

Figure 4.6 Francesco Guardi, Pope Pius VI blessing the crowd in Campo San Giovanni e Paolo (May 1782). Oil on canvas. Oxford, Ashmolean Museum (inv. 186).

mosaics, sculptural and painted decoration, preceded by a scenographic staircase with flight that diverged and converged, was meant to remind viewers of the lower portion of the church of San Marco. To allow the greatest number of people to attend the ceremony, the nearby canal was temporarily covered. The people's blessing is reproduced in an engraving by Giacomo Leonardis as well. A final document of Venetian ceremonies is found in the rich series by Gabriel Bella, mentioned earlier, created for the Trevisan villa of a Venetian aristocrat and offering an extraordinary documentation of the city's festivities over the ages.

On May 12, 1797, the myth and its representation came to a dramatic conclusion with the fall of the thousand-year-old Republic. In Piazza San Marco, the heart of Venice's state liturgy, a liberty tree was erected—this event is portrayed in a print of a drawing by Giacomo Guardi, son of Francesco, who had depicted, not without a vein of veiled melancholy, the glory of the Serenissima on the eve of its demise. As a final insult, the sculptures from the last Bucintoro were set on fire and the quadriga that for centuries had presided over public festivities from the façade of San Marco was taken to Paris.

Notes

I dedicate this chapter to the great scholar and dear friend Prof. Francesco Valcanover who gave me free access to his rich Venetian library. This chapter is part of an interuniversity research project supported by the Italian Ministry of University and Scientific Research (MIUR), entitled "Atlante del Barocco," of which the subscriber is responsible for the Venetian area and Prof. Marcello Fagiolo the national coordinator.

1 The procession to San Sidro on April 16, that to Santa Giustina on October 7, the Visitation of San Rocco on August 16.

2 The paintings, which were originally displayed in the Villa of Campo di Pietra in the vicinity of Oderzo, were later inherited by the Querini and are now preserved at the Querini Stampalia Foundation in Venice (Tamassia Mazzarotto 1961).

3 Venice had always claimed considerable ecclesiastic independence from Rome: the Patriarch was nominated by the Senate before being approved by the pope, who generally confirmed the nomination. Furthermore, the church of San Marco, whose *primicerio* (clerical head) was nominated by the doge, over the course of time had maintained its own peculiar State liturgy, called *Patriarchino*, different from the one dictated by Rome (Muir 1984: 90; more generally, Corner 1749; Cappelletti 1849–51; Cecchetti 1874; Stella 1964; Prodi 1973).

4 The text, in a combination of Italian and Latin: L'ILLUSTRISSIMA SIGNORIA ILLUSTRISSIMUM DOMINIUM LA SPADA ENSIS AMBASCIATORI/DI VARII PRINCIPI ORATORES/DIVERSOR PRINCIPUM OMBRELA IL SERENISSIMO PRINCIPE IL BILLOTTINO IL CANZILLIER GRANDO/ MAGNUS CANZELLARIUS CUSSINO CATEDRA CAPELLANO SECRETARII CORNO CORNU LA CANDELLA CERIUM ALBUM PATRIARCA CANONICI SCUDIERI DEL DOGE CAMERARII SERENISIMI PRINCIPIS TROMBE PIFEARI TUBAE ET BARBITON SERVITORI DELL'IMBASCIATORI ORATOR FAMULI SEI TROMBE DI ARZENTO SEX TUBAE ARGENTAE COMANDATORI PRAECONES GLI OTTO STENDARDI OCTO VEXILLA.

5 Many authors have dwelt on the colors and styles of the clothes of secular and ecclesiastic officials in the dogal processions: Cesare Vecellio and Pietro Bertelli at the end of the sixteenth century, Giacomo Franco at the beginning of the seventeenth, and Andrea Zucchi and Giovanni Grevembroch in the eighteenth century (Bertelli 1589–96; Vecellio 1590; Franco 1610; Zucchi 1702; Grevembroch (mss); Bistrot 1913; Davanzo Poli 2001).

6 Mentioned for the first time in a *promissione ducale* of Doge Ranieri Zeno from February 17, 1253.

7 Patriarch of Venice as of 1451.

8 The term *regatta* has been attributed in turn to the Latin *aurigare* (to race), the Celtic *reatha* (to run) or the Italian *remigare* (to row), from which derives *remigata* (rowing).

9 Only ten of these engravings have survived and were purchased by Venice in 1789 from Sir Robert Col Hoare who was keeping them in the library of his Stourhead residence in Wiltshire (Livan 1942; Pignatti 1972 and 1975; Bettagno 1982: 51–2; Corboz 1985: 477–92, n. D222 and D224; Baetjer and Links 1989: 347–51; Azzi Visentini 1991: 284–7).

10 Description of the contents of this cycle follow. For fuller descriptions, see Livan 1942; Constable 1962; Pignatti 1972: 8,1975: n. 144, pp. 41–68; Mason 1973: 5–10; Succi 1983: 81–3, 87–93; Azzi Visentini 1991: 287–95.

(i) PRESENTAZIONE DEL DOGE IN SAN MARCO. The doge, wearing the crimson *dogalina*, a round wig and the *tozzo* beret, presents himself to the people standing at the right pulpit of the basilica, accompanied by his two senior electors, among cannon shots, squibs and ringing bells. After reading his dogal *promissione* (according to some sources on the *Scala dei Giganti*) and swearing to uphold the prerogatives of the church of San Marco, he pronounced the ritual formula and received the banner of San Marco from the *primicerio*, then exited the church.

(ii) TRASPORTO DEL DOGE IN POZZETTO NELLA PIAZZA SAN MARCO. Having climbed on the large palanquin or *pozzetto* (small well, so called for its similarity to the well curbs found in the city's small squares) and accompanied by two of his relatives, the admiral carrying the banner and the *ballottino* (boy ballot counter), the doge tours the decorated piazza dispensing freshly coined ducats bearing his name to the crowd. Sailors walk ahead and push their way through the crowd with long sticks.

(iii) INCORONAZIONE DEL DOGE SULLA SCALA DEI GIGANTI. On entering the courtyard of his palace, the doge is crowned with the *zoia* by the oldest counselor while standing on the *Scala dei Giganti* in the presence of forty-one electors. A vast public in the courtyard witnesses the ceremony while, according to some, the *dogaressa* looks on from the palace windows.

(iv) RINGRAZIAMENTO DEL DOGE AL MAGGIOR CONSIGLIO. The newly elected doge proceeds to the great hall, decorated on its back wall by Tintoretto's *Paradiso* and on its side opposite the windows over the Molo, by glorious episodes of Venetian history. Here, he finds the entire Great Counsel, all the city's nobles who have reached adulthood without embracing the ecclesiastic life, at that time, approximately a thousand. Here, sitting on the throne below the *Paradiso*, flanked by the members of Council of the Ten, he thanks the entire Great Counsel.

(v) PARTENZA DEL DOGE BUCINTORO PER LO SPOSALIZIO DEL MARE.

(vi) SOSTA DEL DOGE COL BUCINTORO A SAN NICOLÒ.

(vii) IL DOGE ASSISTE ALLA FESTA DEL GIOVEDÌ GRASSO. From the royal box, set up for the occasion in the loggia of the dogal palace, Doge Mocenigo, whose insignia are visible, attends the festival held on Thursday before the beginning of Lent, the culmination of *Carnevale*. The show takes place on a raised platform at the center of the Piazzetta, at the foot of a magnificent three-story ephemeral apparatus; the entertainment consists of athletic games, including the human pyramid called *Forza d'Ercole* [Hercules' strength] in which the two opposing factions of Castellani and Nicoletti competed against each other. The performance included the Flight of the Turk or of the *Colombina* (small dove) where a young man was lowered from the top of Saint Mark's bell tower, with ropes that are partially visible in the paintings, scattering flowers and leaflets with verses honoring the doge as he descends.

(viii) VISITA DEL DOGE ALLA SALUTE. Every year, on November 21, the doge boards one of his *peatoni*, portrayed on the left of the print, to visit the Church of *La Salute*, using the boat bridge visible on the right.

(ix) PROCESSIONE NEL GIORNO DEL CORPUS DOMINI. The long procession of the Corpus Domini, with citizens (originally patricians flanking the poor), clergy and representatives of the Great Schools, parade under a wooden colonnade built along the square's perimeter. The doge is portrayed on the left.

(x) VISITA DEL DOGE A SAN ZACCARIA. On Easter Day, in the afternoon, the doge, preceded and followed by the members of his retinue and under the umbrella, visited the Church and convent of Saint Zacharias where the noblest Venetian girls completed their religious novitiate. A member of his train carried the *zoja* on a pillow, since, according to tradition, the first horn had been offered in 855 to Doge Tradonico by Agostina Morisini, abbess of Saint Zachary, as a token of appreciation for the concessions given to the Benedictine convent.

(xi) RICEVIMENTO DEGLI AMBASCIATORI AVANTI AL DOGE IN COLLEGIO. The doge, surrounded by masked aristocrats, receives representatives of foreign states, in the hall of the Collegio, lavishly decorated on the back wall with Veronese's votive canvas commemorating the Battle of Lepanto and with paintings by Tintoretto on the wall facing the windows.

(xii) BANCHETTO DEL DOGE. The annual banquet took place under a ceiling frescoed by Guarana and canvases by Bambini along the walls, presently part of the Patriarch's residence. Masked aristocrats were admitted as spectators while the first two courses were served.

11 The artists, scenographers, architects and painters for this event included Antonio and Alessandro Mauro, Giorgio and Domenico Fossati, Antonio Codognato and the young Giannantonio Selva.

12 L'Arrivo di Sua Santità a San Giorgio in Alga e incontro col Serenissimo; Pontificale nella chiesa dei Santi Giovanni e Paolo; Sua Santità in atto di scendere dal trono nella sala d'udienza per incontrare il Serenissimo nell'ultima visita di congedo; and La benedizione al popolo nella finta loggia alla Scuola di San Marco.

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Abbreviations

ASV	Archivio di Stato di Venezia
BMV	Biblioteca Marciana Venezia
MCV	Biblioteca del Museo Correr Venezia
ms.	manoscritto (manuscript)
b.	busta (folder)

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5

Statecraft or stagecraft?

English paper architecture in the seventeenth century[1]

Caroline van Eck

Whereas only a few major building projects were actually completed in seventeenth-century Britain before the Restoration, much ephemeral, paper and what we would now call virtual architecture was produced: the masque designs by Inigo Jones; the chapter called "The House" in Henry Hawkins' emblematical collection *Partheneia Sacra* in which architecture is a crowded locus for all sorts of meaning; and reconstructions of ancient or lost buildings, ranging from Stonehenge to the churches of the early Christians. These varieties of paper or ephemeral architecture are usually studied separately: the ephemeral architecture of masque designs by historians of literature and the theater as part of the *Gesamtkunstwerk* for which they set the stage, emblem books by historians of emblemata and reconstructions by architectural historians who look mainly at their stylistic and archaeological aspects. Yet it is highly doubtful whether viewers at the time when these works of paper and ephemeral architecture were produced considered them as separate categories, each demanding their own method of study.

Some viewers at least did not distinguish in a clear-cut way between solid and paper architecture. Thus the antiquarian William Harrison remarked about Longleat and other large Elizabethan country houses that they were "like cut paperwork" (Girouard 1983: 20). A puzzled observer of Inigo Jones's stage sets for the masque *Floating Island* representing churches, houses and palaces remarked that they looked like the desks or bookcases set at an angle to the walls in a library (Orgel and Strong 1973, vol. 1: 12). Henry Hawkins' *collage* of rarified Catholic speculation on the nature of the Virgin Mary as the house of Christ, allusive emblems and practical advice on house design is equally incongruous to modern readers (Hawkins 1633 and 1993). Conversely, in his masque designs, Jones proceeded like an emblem writer, first hitting upon a visual conceit that would serve as the underlying theme unifying words, action and image. Courtiers reporting on Jones's masques often used the emblematical term "conceit." Jones himself used the term as well, for instance in the notes for the *Lords' Masque* (Orgel and Strong 1973 vol. 2: 244). In the description of *Albion's Triumph* of 1632 he wrote, "Outsides have insides, shells have kernels in them, and under every fable, nay under almost everything, lies a moral" (ibid. vol. 2: 456), thus exemplifying the emblematist's conviction of universal signification. As Orgel has pointed out, the widely held view in the seventeenth century was that thinking works primarily through images (ibid. vol. 1: 3–4). The genre of the masque is predicated on the conviction that the visual speaks more directly to the soul than words. Jones himself observed in the record of *Albion's Triumph* (1632), the first masque to be staged after the rupture with Jonson, that "We speak in acts and scorn words' trifling scenes" (Peacock 1995: 309). Sometimes more money was spent on the ephemeral architecture of a masque than on a solid stone building, only to have its costly stage sets and costumes destroyed immediately after its production.

All this suggests that the demarcations between the virtual and the real, the solid and the ephemeral were not so clear as we now tend to think they are. Even the most evident difference to our eyes—that between "real," that is three-dimensional, architecture and the virtual spatiality of paper buildings or stage sets—was not as crystal-clear and self-evident to seventeenth-century viewers, as the remark by Harrison indicates. But if seventeenth-century viewers did not look at, or think about paper architecture in such terms, what concepts and competences did they use instead? Is it conceivable that they thought of paper and ephemeral architecture as belonging to one large group of artefacts, together with three-dimensional architecture made of solid building materials? And if so, how did they define this category? And how did they see the relation between "real" and virtual architecture, that is architecture that was ephemeral, or which existed only as paper reconstructions of buildings that never themselves existed?

To throw some light on these issues, I will consider a number of ways in which architecture figured in England in the early seventeenth century: in Sir Henry Wotton's *Elements of Architecture* of 1624, the first complete treatise on classical architecture to be published in Britain; in the masque designs of Inigo Jones; and his reconstruction of Stonehenge. Considered superficially, they have two things in common. Their original medium was paper, even in the stage designs of Inigo Jones, and they are all concerned with classical architecture—more precisely, with the architecture of the Romans, both in Roman Britain and in Renaissance Italy. But are they connected as well by other similarities that run deeper than their medium or subject matter?

Wotton's *Elements of Architecture*

Sir Henry Wotton's *Elements of Architecture* is a good place to start, because his book offers one of the very few general discussions of all the visual arts, including architecture, produced in seventeenth-century England. Wotton, who lived from 1568 to 1639, was a diplomat, collector and writer. He spent much of his life as English ambassador in Venice, where he was involved in the acquisition of works of art for the Stuart Court. The *Elements* were written after his return to England in 1623, to support his application for the provostship of Eton College. This was successful, and among the things he brought to Eton is one of the few illuminated manuscript copies of Leon Battista Alberti's *De re aedificatoria*, which is still kept in the Eton library. Although Wotton assumed a pose of modesty and wrote in great haste, his book was the fruit of extensive, first-hand study of classical and Renaissance sources, both built and written, and of his acquaintance during the periods of his life spent in Italy with important artists, theorists and patrons. The *Elements* was read widely, both in a Latin edition which appeared in 1649 as part of Johannes de Laet's edition of Vitruvius, in a Spanish version published in 1698, and in various English editions.

One would expect from such an author steeped in Italian Renaissance discourse on the arts that he would follow Vasari and state that the visual arts and architecture share a common basis in *disegno*, the idea in the mind of the artist that subsequently receives material and visual form as a design drawing. But Wotton takes a very different approach; his definition is political, not artistic or aesthetic:

> [. . .] true it is indeed that the Marble Monuments & Memories of well deseruing Men, wherewith the very high wayes were *strewed on each side was not a bare a*nd transitory entertainement of the Eye, or onely a gentle deception of Time, to the Travailer: But had also a secret and strong Influence, euen to the aduancement of the Monarchie, by continuall representation of vertuous examples; so as in that point ART became a piece of *State*.
>
> (Wotton 1624: 102)

Wotton refers here to the Roman Via Appia, which was lined on both sides by the graves of Roman families, and hence became one long extended monument to Roman history. These were built not for aesthetic enjoyment or variety, but to instil in the mind of the viewer a persuasive image of Roman virtue, and thereby to incite to virtuous action. Art in this view is politics by another means, and in calling art a "piece of state," Wotton follows the classical rhetorical view of art not as an object of aesthetic enjoyment for its own sake, but as a means of persuasion.

Wotton was not alone in this political consideration of art and architecture. After the Restoration, Sir Christopher Wren began his notes for an architectural treatise by observing that:

> Architecture has its political Use; public Buildings being the Ornament of a Country; it establishes a Nation, draws People and Commerce; makes the People love their naive Country, which Passion is the Original of all great Actions in a Common-wealth. [. . .] Modern *Rome* subsists still, by the

> Ruins and Imitation of the *old*; as does *Jerusalem*, by the Temple of the Sepulchre, and other Remains of *Helena's* Zeal. Architecture aims at Eternity.
> (Wren 2003: 218)

In this explicit interest in the political uses of classical architecture, English architects and theorists of the seventeenth century were quite unique, as they were in so many other things. On the continent, and particularly in Italy, patrons and architects were well aware of the political aspects of their patronage and buildings, but rarely discussed it in writing. The main architectural treatises of the Renaissance, from Alberti to Palladio, are almost completely silent about it.

What makes these passages even more original is that they say something about how the political use of classical architecture actually works. Both Wotton and Wren play here on the Latin root of "monument"—*monere*—which means both to warn and to recall, and is also the basis for the Latin *moneta*, money (Onians 1999: 181–92). Incidentally, the mnemonic role of architecture calls to mind a remark made by Tacitus, one of the most intensely read Roman authors in seventeenth-century England, on the relation between speech, memory and, by implication, other ways of keeping memory alive when speech is impossible: "Along with speech, we should have lost memory itself, had it been in our power to forget as much as to keep silent" (Tacitus *Agricola* II.i; Moore 1998). Buildings thus become visual rhetoric, just as the main function and *raison d'être* of paintings and statues was considered by artists, patrons and theorists alike not to be a thing of beauty, but an incitement to virtue. Wren stressed the role of architecture in providing a focus for patriotism and housing the basic needs of civil society.

The political use of architecture is based in part on the rhetorical view that all human expression, from speech to gesture to more permanent utterances such as painting, drama or architecture, is persuasive communication. But on the opening page of the *Principles of Architecture*, Wotton states, "In Architecture as in all other Operative Arts, the end must direct the Operation. The end is to build well." In calling architecture an "operative," that is a productive art, Wotton follows the Aristotelian definition of all human activities. From Antiquity until the end of the eighteenth century, two main classifications of all human activities and pursuits were current. One was the division into the mechanical and liberal arts, codified by Martianus Capella in the fifth century AD in his *De Nuptiis Philologiae et Mercurii*. To the first belonged all activities which we would now call crafts, concerned with the practical aspects of human survival: for instance shoemaking, house building or medicine. The seven liberal arts were concerned with scientific knowledge and contemplation, reasoning and language: geometry, music, astronomy and physics (which made up the *quadrivium*), and grammar, logic and rhetoric (which made up the *trivium*). The other classification was introduced by Aristotle, and was based on a distinction between doing, making and knowing. Architecture was a productive art, as were music and poetry. Rhetoric was considered by Quintilian to be both a practical art because its aim is to do something, namely to speak persuasively, but also a productive art, because the orator writes speeches or histories and thus produces lasting texts.

In Wotton's view, architecture is not singled out from the other arts, as would be done in modern classifications of the arts, because of its utility or practical aspects. Instead it is considered on the same footing as rhetoric, poetry or the making of a monument: as a productive art, concerned with making durable objects that have both a practical and the more ideological function of upholding the state. The question then is, how can buildings perform that role?

One clue is provided by Wotton's discussion of a building's situation, in which he reviews practical considerations but also another category:

> Some againe may bee said to bee Optical? Such as I meane as concerne the Properties of a well chosen Prospect: which I will call the Royaltie of Sight. For as there is a Lordship (as it were) of the Feete, wherein the Master doth much joy when he walketh about the Line of his owne Possessions: So there is a Lordship likewise of the Eye which being a raunging, and Imperious, and (I might say) an usurping Sence; can indure no narrow circomscription; but must be fedde, both with extent and varietie. [. . .] Lastly, I remember a private caution, which I know not well how to sort, unlesse I should call it Political. By no meanes, to build too neere a great Neighbour; which were in truth to bee as unfortunately seated on the earth, as Mercurie is in the Heavens, for the most part, ever in combustion, or obscuritie, under brighter beames then his owne.
>
> (Wootton 1624: 1)

Wotton advises here that buildings should be placed on the top of a hill, or at least that their situation be unencumbered, so that they can be seen from all sides and more importantly, that their owners or inhabitants can enjoy a free and varied prospect. This is no disinterested aesthetic enjoyment, but the visual expression of the gazer's dominion over what she can survey, just as there is a "dominion of the feet," in which the owner sets out her own territory by walking along its boundaries. Enjoying a full, varied and unobstructed view is therefore an expression of dominance. The architect should try to achieve such a panoramic view by situating the building in such a way that it forms the center, the viewpoint from which its surroundings can best be seen. Thus, persuasion works not only through the triggering of remembrance, as in the Roman monuments cited above, but also in a more abstract way through the construction of the visual domain.

The masques of Inigo Jones

Wotton's instructions on classical design can only be called paper architecture in a metaphorical sense. For the real ephemeral thing we have to turn to what on many counts was the most prominent and highly rated variety of architectural design under the English courts of James I and Charles I—the masque. Masques were very costly, highly conspicuous and prestigious events at the early Stuart court, and (after the rupture between the poet Ben Jonson and the designer Inigo Jones in 1631) they consisted principally of paper architecture, constructed to last for only one night: the architectural stage-sets and backdrops were made of painted paper attached to wooden props.

Before Jones's appointment as Surveyor of the King's Works in 1614, masque design was his primary artistic activity; in masques he experimented with classical design on a scale and with a variety that would have been impossible to explore in real architecture. As has often been noted, the Stuart masques were not plays; they were allegories or emblems of kingship. Jones and others often spoke of the principal "invention" or "devise" that was the basis of a masque, using the terms from rhetorical emblematics.

The masques also functioned as a laboratory for the introduction of classical architecture and design in Britain. Practically all elements of Jones's designs, from the costumes, attitudes and gestures to the architectural settings, are derived from Italian and French models, both in architectural treatises and publications of Italian *apparati* and festivals. This was not, as has been suggested, due to a lack of creativity (cf. Peacock 1995: 30–5). The imitation of respected examples was an integral part of Renaissance artistry and of the rhetorical curriculum, in which *imitatio* was succeeded by *aemulatio*, and an artist could show his talent by choosing and combining the best models. But there is also another aspect to Jones's imitation of continental models; by integrating them into his English masques he made them part of English artistic repertoire. In their design, the masques integrated Renaissance art and architecture on English soil; in their performance these forms were seen by the court, which was thus educated in good taste. And because all of the masques celebrate an idealized Stuart monarchy, the classical tradition and its Renaissance renewal was thus integrated into a visual and verbal enactment or staging of idealized kingship. In their conscious revival of classical drama, buildings, costume and gesture, the masques were antiquity made spectacular.

After his break with Ben Jonson, Jones observed that his masques were "but pictures with light and motion" (Peacock 1995: 309). This brief remark points to the importance of pictorial techniques, in particular linear perspective, in creating these spectacles of antiquity. In the performance of masques a complex dialectic between reality and illusion, natural and staged behaviour was acted out, in which perspective and architecture were constitutive factors. The proscenium was a significant threshold in this dialectic. Its form was derived from Roman triumphal arches, which were also powerful liminal objects, ones that marked the moment when a Roman general was transformed from the leader of an army to an unarmed citizen. Behind the proscenium arch was a stage on which the masquers performed, but there was also frequently a narrow stage in front of it, with steps leading to the audience. The proscenium arch also served as a temporal threshold. In his description of the last Stuart masque, *Salmacida Spolia*, Jones called it "the border that encloses the scene and made a frontispiece to all the work" (Orgel and Strong 1973: 730). The earliest author to associate the beginning of a play or speech with a portico is probably the sixteenth-century Venetian writer about art Francisco Sansovino, but Jones's use of the porticoes of classical temples follows Palladio and Scamozzi's adaptation of temple fronts for the façades of Christian churches, and their use of portico-based title pages in their architectural treatises (Sansovino 1569: fol. 5 recto).

All the authority and majesty of classical temples was thus added to the paper design of treatises and the theatre. But Jones's remark also suggests that this framing device directs the gaze of the viewer from the borders of the stage to what is going to happen at the centre of the scene, in the depths suggested by linear perspective (Peacock 1995: 218). Linear perspective served to direct and change the viewing habits of the audience. As John Peacock has shown, Jones deliberately used perspective to change the viewing attitude of his public. The puzzled reactions to his early masques show that Jacobean spectators did not always know what to make of his perspectival illusionism. At the time, the viewing competences they brought to the masques, as to all visual art, were those possessed by readers of texts. Elizabethan portraits and miniatures explore the flatness of their medium; they suggest little relief, let alone three-dimensional space. When linear perspective was introduced, its use was reserved to royal portraits and the stage sets for the masques. Thus, viewers had to accustom themselves to Jones's perspectival illusions of buildings set in three-dimensional space. One could perhaps say that this process of adaptation was thematized by Jones, for instance in the grand classic tableau that forms the strictly perspectival backdrop to the end of *Albion's Triumph* of 1632, which uses a fragment of a cornice in the collection of the Earl of Arundel (Peacock 1995: 35) (Figure 5.1).

But the seating arrangements also show that linear perspective is not only a very powerful instrument of pictorial composition that determines the exact position and relations between the parts of a painting. It also determines viewing positions. When a masque culminated in the revelation of an allegory of kingship, the masquers—who included prominent courtiers and members of the royal family—stepped out from the stage to invite members of the public to dance with them. During the masque, the main point of interest was not the performance on the stage, but the king watching it. James I was well aware of the theatrical character of kingship, as we see from his observation in *Basilikon Doron* of 1599, the treatise on monarchy he wrote for his son Prince Henry, "A King is as one set on a stage, whose smallest actions and gestures, all the people gazingly do behold" (Orgel and Strong 1973: 50). Accordingly, the king was placed exactly on the point from which he, and he alone, could fully enjoy the spatial illusion, that is the viewpoint corresponding to the vanishing point of the perspectival construction used in the stage sets. Courtiers were seated around him in an order which reflected their closeness to the king (Orgel and Strong 1973: 7). The use of linear perspective therefore is not simply a neutral pictorial strategy to create the illusion of three-dimensionality on a flat surface; it is a powerful rhetorical instrument, because through its ordering of sight lines and viewing positions it establishes hierarchy by visual means. Stagecraft thus becomes a means of statecraft.

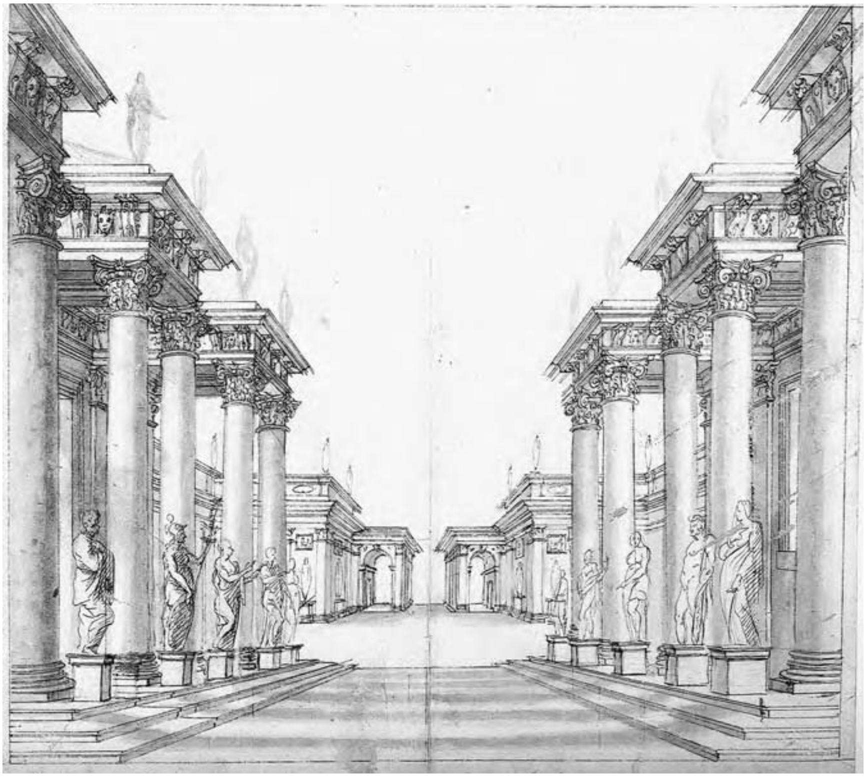

Figure 5.1 Inigo Jones, design for scene I, "a Roman Atrium," of *Albion's Triumph*, Chatsworth, 1631. Photo: Department of Art History, Leiden University, Netherlands.

Inigo Jones's reconstruction of Stonehenge

Linear perspective also had other powerful associations for Jones, namely its use in the representations of Roman monuments in the architectural treatises of Palladio and Scamozzi. Jones exploited these in his work on Stonehenge. To discuss a complex possessing such monumental solidity in the context of ephemeral architecture may seem a little perverse, but Jones made a paper reconstruction of it which looks almost like a staging. Both in its representational techniques, use of classical architecture and persuasive purpose this document is related to his masque designs and Wotton's *Elements of Architecture*.

As Sir Christopher Wren observed in the passage quoted earlier, "Architecture aims at Eternity," adding, "and therefore the only Thing uncapable of Modes and Fashions [are] its Principals, the *Orders*." With this, he made explicit one of the deepest, but usually implicit, convictions of anybody involved with classical architecture as a designer or patron—that the formal vocabulary of classical architecture, based on the five orders and the temple, somehow represent the eternal, fundamentally unchangeable essence of Western architecture. One reason for this conviction is tectonic: the system of columns and trabeation as exemplified in the Greek temple front embodies the essential interaction of load-bearing and thrust out of which spaces are created. The other is cultural: classical architecture is the building style of the Greeks and Romans, and thereby stands for everything their classical culture implies, ranging from democracy to the idea of the Empire, and the post-classical complex of ideas associated with *translatio imperii*.

It is against this background of the appropriation of classical architecture for dynastic purposes that we must consider Jones's treatment of the enigmatic prehistoric remains at Stonehenge. In 1620, when King James I stayed at Wilton, he sent Inigo Jones to Stonehenge to prove that it was built by the Romans. Jones made extensive measurements and drawings of the stones, a ground plan and a reconstruction; these were published posthumously in 1655 under the title *The Most Notable Antiquity of Stone-Heng*, by his amanuensis John Webb on the basis of the notes he had left. According to Jones, Stonehenge was originally a Roman temple. The argument is in three parts: first, alternative theories are refuted, chief among them the prevalent view that Stonehenge was built by Druids; thus the ground is prepared for Jones's interpretation that Stonehenge was a Roman temple. Next, he offered a reconstruction in word and image based on the measurements he made on the spot. Finally, the plates show in one glance what it took Jones about sixty pages to argue: that these are the remains of a circular Roman temple dedicated to Coelus or the Sky, because of its roofless structure, open to the skies, the sun and the moon. The argument presented by the text for the Roman origins of Stonehenge is based on a careful listing of statements by Vitruvius, Tacitus and other Roman authorities about temple architecture and the Roman presence in Britain. The plates argue for the same thesis with different means. They show the ground plan, façade, section, orthogonal and perspectival projection, all carefully drawn to scale (Figures 5.2–5.5). Jones thus followed the procedure recommended by Leon Battista Alberti in the first Renaissance architectural treatise, *De re aedificatoria* or "On the art of building," substantially completed in the 1450s and published in 1486. Architects should follow the humanist method of collecting as much classical source material as possible, read the best authorities, and on the basis of such philological comparisons make their text editions. Similarly the architect should inspect Roman monuments with his own eyes, measure and draw them, compare them with the remains of other similar buildings, and base his reconstruction or design on these notes taken on the spot. The result should be published in the form of a set of drawings: ground plan, section and façade, or a model (Alberti 1992: VI.i).

The decision itself to give Stonehenge the treatment usually reserved to Roman antiquities was highly unusual, and cannot be explained from a stylistic, aesthetic or engineering interest, as is shown by the reconstruction Jones made

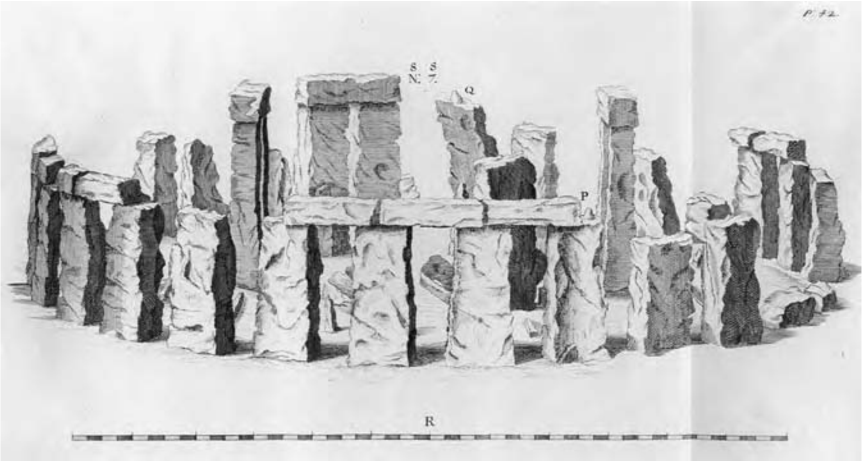

Figure 5.2 Inigo Jones, view of Stonehenge in original state. From: *The Most Notable Antiquity of Great Britain, vulgarly called Stone-Heng, on Salisbury Plain. Restored by Inigo Jones*, 1655, plate 7. Photo: Koninklijke Bibliotheek, The Hague, Netherlands, 3318 B 30.

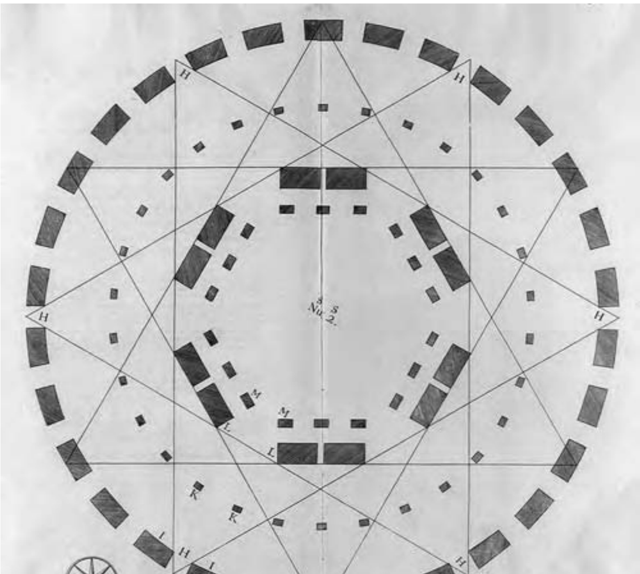

Figure 5.3 Inigo Jones, reconstructed ground plan of Stonehenge in original state. From: *The Most Notable Antiquity of Great Britain, vulgarly called Stone-Heng, on Salisbury Plain. Restored by Inigo Jones*, 1655, plate 6. Photo: Koninklijke Bibliotheek, The Hague, Netherlands, 3318 B 30.

and what he deemed worthy of mentioning. No other English prehistoric remains were singled out for the same kind of analysis or reconstruction. Until the Gothic Revival, such treatment was really restricted to Roman and Greek antiquities. But when we look at Jones's ground plan and reconstructions, it becomes clear that he was not interested in archaeology or antiquarianism per se. Instead, what he set out to do was to assimilate Stonehenge, the oldest

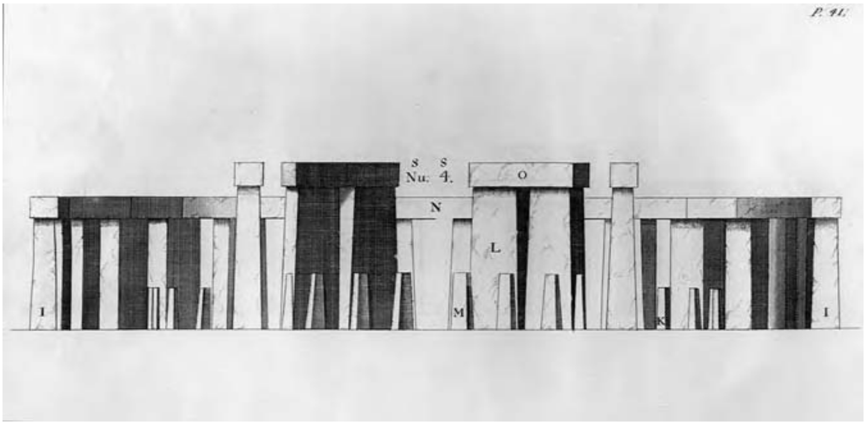

Figure 5.4 Inigo Jones, sectional elevation of Stonehenge as restored. From: *The Most Notable Antiquity of Great Britain, vulgarly called Stone-Heng, on Salisbury Plain. Restored by Inigo Jones*, 1655, plate 4. Photo: Koninklijke Bibliotheek, The Hague, Netherlands, 3318 B 30.

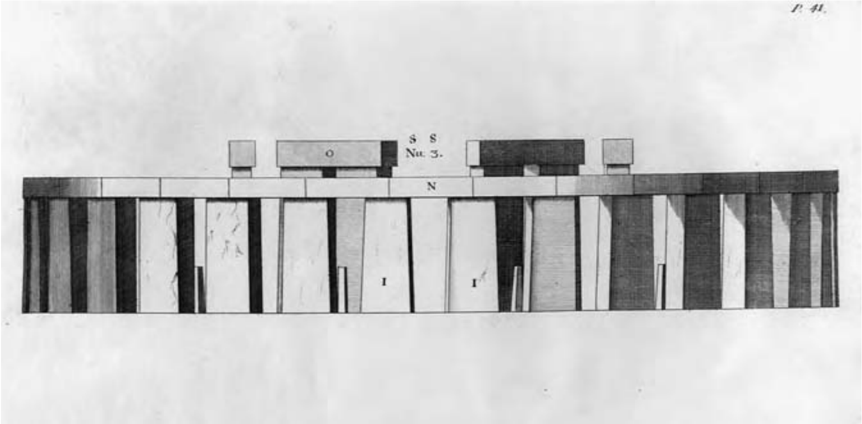

Figure 5.5 Inigo Jones, perspectival view of Stonehenge as restored. From: *The Most Notable Antiquity of Great Britain, vulgarly called Stone-Heng, on Salisbury Plain. Restored by Inigo Jones*, 1655, plate 2. Photo: Koninklijke Bibliotheek, The Hague, Netherlands, 3318 B 30.

British building known at the time, into the Vitruvian tradition, by giving the same representational treatment to Stonehenge as the Roman antiquities received in the treatises of Serlio or Palladio.

In his opening statement, Jones straightaway declared that Druids could not have built Stonehenge, because there is no trace of academies of art among them, and no remnant of any pursuit of the liberal arts or sciences needed to educate an architect in the Vitruvian sense. Even the explanation of its name, Jones offers, is part of the assimilating strategy, "This *Antiquity* [. . .] because the *Architraves* are set upon the heads of the upright stones, and hang (as it were) in the air, is generally known by the name of *Stoneheng*" (Webb 1655: 55). That is, from the very beginning Jones's inquiry is not an attempt to grasp the unique character of prehistoric Britain on its own terms, but instead it is judged according to the standards of classical culture. Finally, after the reconstruction he asks who may have been the builders of this pile, and answers it in a typically classicizing fashion. First of all, it is so magnificent that only the Romans could have built it (Webb 1655: 65). Second, according to Jones, it uses the Tuscan order—the one order the Romans invented, and which occurs only outside Italy in places where the Romans had been. Hence, Stonehenge could only have been designed by Romans. Here, Jones first attributes two typically classical qualities to Stonehenge: magnificence or *magnificentia*, a characteristic distinguishing Roman public buildings; and the use of the simple, sturdy Tuscan order. That the stones remaining of Stonehenge no longer sport capitals (a necessary sign of an order), is only because of the weather and mistreatment of the building by vandals after the Romans had left (Webb 1655: 65). The argument ends with a dig at those antiquarians who believed it was the work of indigenous Britons. According to Jones, they err and are deaf to rational argument supported by the authority of classical culture. In an instance of the ultimate classical rhetorical strategy, classical culture is presented not as one option among many, but as completely natural and self-evident. Designing classical buildings for the properly educated is really doing what comes naturally:

> As I have delivered my own judgement freely, all reason they should enjoy theirs. But such as sail in the vast Ocean of time, amongst the craggy rocks of *Antiquity*, steering their course, betwixt anciently approved customs, and convincing arguments, guided by good Authority, and sound judgement, arrive much safer, and with better repute, in the secure Haven of undoubted *Truth*. For mine own part, I had rather erre happily with venerable *Antiquity*, then so much as trouble my thoughts with modern conceits.
>
> (Webb 1655: 105)

Jones rests his case with a well-known and often reproduced statement of this attitude by Sebastiano Serlio, who published the first complete codification of the classical orders of architecture in 1538, "*Roma quanta fuit ipsa ruina docet*" (The ruins themselves, that is without our aid, teach us Rome's greatness; or, Even the ruins teach us Rome's greatness) (Figure 5.6).

Figure 5.6 Sebastiano Serlio, frontispiece of *Il Terzo Libro dell'Architettura. From: Il Terzo Libro di Seb. Serlio: nel qvale se figvrano e descrivono le antiquita di Roma, e le altre che sono in Italia, e fvori di Italia.*Venice, 1540. Photo: Koninklijke Bibliotheek, The Hague, Netherlands, 1303 A 5.

The Antiquity of Stone-Heng is therefore not merely an essay in architectural history or antiquarianism, even though it is presented as such, but in cultural assimilation. And ultimately the purpose of this exercise was dynastical. By arguing that Stonehenge was built by Roman, or Roman-educated architects; that the large stones were really a rough, British variety of the Doric order weathered down to naked blocks of stone in the course of centuries; and that the complex had really been a temple dedicated to Coelus; Jones could give credibility to claims that Britain had a strong Roman past. James I used such "evidence" of a Roman past to bolster his unification of England and Scotland under one crown, to claim that the creation of the new kingdom of Great Britain was really a resumption, after the Dark Ages, of Roman rule. A *renovatio imperii* that is, taking the rule of the Roman Empire and translating it to Britain (Kishlansky 1996: 68–82).

In this case, the use of classical architecture is not, as it was in Italy, the effort to bring back to life a dead building style of the past. It was its opposite, the recreation in word and image of an ancient monument in the classical style, to create not a new present, but a past and a political pedigree for the dynasty and the nation. In this respect, Jones's reconstruction is close to his masque designs. Both were aimed at creating visible allegories of kingship based on a reformulation of Britain's mythical past. In the masques, that mythical past is presented as a lost golden age to be restored by the Stuarts, as in *Albion's Triumph*, or in *Oberon the Fairy Prince* of 1611, in which the victorious British prince is associated with King James' recent union of the English and Scottish crowns, and a symbolic map of the new kingdom of Great Britain was depicted on the curtain before the masque began (Peacock 1995: 74). The mythical past is also transformed, as happened to Stonehenge, into the enduring remains of a classical origin, as in *Coelum Britannicum*. That masque itself begins with a representation of the three kingdoms of Great Britain which serve, one might say, as a silent actor or an acting image. In both varieties, the essentially classical nature of the British monarchy is celebrated. The last masque to be staged in Britain, *Salmacida Spolia* of 1640, ends not with the usual dance of the masquers with members of the audience, but with a large tableau, now lost, of "magnificent buildings" and eight masquers who represent the planetary spheres. It presents an identification of classical architecture, Stuart rule and cosmic harmony (Orgel and Strong 1973: 732).

Conclusion

In Wotton's *Elements*, and Jones's masque designs and *Antiquity of Stone-heng*, the visual aspects of architecture are employed to influence the viewer. Wotton—together with Wren—is one of the very few early modern writers on architectural theory to address this issue openly. He did not give precise or detailed instructions on how to achieve a "dominion of the eye" when building a country house, but in line with the title of his book gave the conceptual foundations for architectural persuasion. Ultimately such use of architecture goes back to

Aristotle's classification of architecture as a productive art, built to serve the well-being of individuals and the state. Jones's masque designs share the same foundation in Aristotelian thought on the arts. As John Peacock has shown so well, both the concept of the Stuart masque as a genre, and Jones's use of imitation are based on Aristotle's *Poetics*. The subject of the *Poetics* is the drama; not, as it subsequently became restricted in the seventeenth century by French adaptations, dramatic poetry alone, but the drama considered as an imitation of significant action represented by poetry, music and the visual arts, all deployed together in the staging and acting of a well-constructed plot (Orgel and Strong 1973: 4). Even though the masques are vividly staged allegories or emblems of kingship and not dramas in the traditional Greek sense, they do draw on such a view of the theatre as a *Gesamtkunstwerk*, and it is precisely in such a cooperative way that music, poetry, painting, gesture and architecture work together to achieve their common purpose: a persuasive representation of ideal kingship. The backdrop to the final stage of *Time Vindicated* 1623 for instance, shows the recently completed Banqueting House, in itself a glorification of absolute rule.

What is perhaps most striking to the modern architectural historian in the use Wotton and Jones made of classical architecture, is that their first aim was not to present reconstructions that would be archaeologically and stylistically perfect. Jones's handling of Roman monuments in the masques, although imitative, is really a series of transformations of these models; his correct handling of orders and proportion, for instance when he corrected the mistakes in the Vredeman designs he used as examples, is only part of his effort to create a Roman past for Britain, not an aim in itself. But it is also striking to note how fluid the boundaries appear between solid and ephemeral architecture. There is no evidence that Jones considered his masque designs to be less important than his buildings. For him it was not a minor part of architectural design, but an essential preparation (Peacock 1995: 57–8). Similarly in Wotton's treatment of architecture as statecraft no distinction is made between various architectural genres; what counts is their political, persuasive function. Contrary to the tendency to treat ephemeral architecture as a derivative from solid, built architecture, it is precisely in the ephemeral world of paper architecture that fundamental issues about buildings and their viewers, the classical and the modern, past and present were acted out.

Note

1 The research on which this chapter is based was funded very generously by the Dutch Foundation for Scientific Research (NWO).

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6

Framing history

The Jubilee of 1625, the dedication of new Saint Peter's and the Baldacchino

Maarten Delbeke

Since the 1960s, the festival architecture of baroque Rome has received a fair amount of attention (Berendsen 1961; Weil 1974; Fagiolo dell'Arco and Carandini 1977–8; Fagiolo dell'Arco 1997; Imorde *et al.* 1999; Schraven 2006). Similarly, the mostly short and prosaic written descriptions of seventeenth century festivals and processions have been repertoried and analyzed in terms of their strategies of representation and communication (Diez 1986; Frangenberg 1990; Fagiolo dell'Arco 1994; Nussdorfer 1998). This research suggests that ephemeral architecture and its reproduction in word and image offer a privileged view into the very mechanisms that define baroque art and architecture, and the intentions or agendas underlying these strategies. Anthony Blunt, for instance, has argued that the artistic practices of seventeenth-century Rome are deeply preoccupied with illusionism in the service of the communication of divine mysteries (Blunt 1978). Festival architecture, then, seems to push to its limit the research into the artistic means best suited to communicate such higher truths. Its lighter and more manageable construction and its ephemeral lifespan allowed for audacious and indeed spectacular designs, incorporating a multitude of techniques, media and imagery far more freely than permanent architecture, such as artificial lighting, large sculptures or heraldry on a monumental scale. The spectacular nature of festival architecture in seventeenth-century Rome points out the intrinsic theatricality of art and architecture in Rome during this period, and exemplifies the important role played by theatricality in the representation of institutions and the expression of power. In short, ephemeral architecture and its dissemination in word and image have been fruitfully examined as a "laboratory" for the design strategies and artistic means available to the seventeenth-century Roman artist and architect, and as practices exemplifying the role of art and architecture in the political, religious and social spheres of Roman baroque society.

Drawing upon such research, my essay aims to address a related but different question: if, and how, festival architecture—and the events that occasion its creation—help to establish the meaning and subsequent interpretation of other, more permanent constructions? Even if the lifespan of permanent architecture far exceeds the duration of the feasts and festivals that intermittingly surround them, these festive moments sometimes coincide with, or result from, crucial moments in that building's history, such as its foundation or consecration. Such moments anchor a building firmly to a specific moment in time and, one might say, to the place as it was then.

It is widely accepted now that if one wishes to understand why a building was built or what it was meant to communicate, the historian will examine the circumstances surrounding its commission and construction. Less attention however, has been paid to the interaction between monumental works of architecture and the ephemeral constructions that were erected in the vicinity of these works, especially at significant occasions in the monument's history. Historians have also studied how practices developed for ephemeral constructions have influenced the design of permanent architecture. Yet, although we know that documents recording the meaning of ephemeral architecture—and sometimes even its intended effect on its audiences—were written down and circulated in order to codify and expand the impact of festivals, there has been little research on the role such communication might have played in constructing the perception and interpretation of permanent architecture from the same era. Such an investigation seems all the more promising, since the festivals that occasioned both the ephemeral architecture and its reproduction in print were highly ritualized and bound by conventions—so that the layers of meaning incorporated into the architecture were well understood by many people who actually saw these works. If, at such moments, we could better understand how the ephemeral and the permanent were meant to work together in communicating specific ideas, it might be possible to retrieve something of the reception and interpretation of both.

The aim of this chapter is to test the hypothesis that ephemeral architecture contributes to the meaning and subsequently to the reception of permanent architecture, using a case study. I propose the Jubilee of 1625 and in particular, the procession of the arch-confraternity of the Rosary of that year which, with the dedication in 1626 of the new Basilica of St Peter's in Rome, constitute two moments that frame the ideas communicated by the *Baldacchino*, a giant bronze structure built between 1626 and 1633 over the papal altar and the apostolic tombs of Saints Peter and Paul, under Michelangelo's cupola in the new basilica.

Several authors have stressed the historical connection between the jubilee, the consecration of the new cathedral, and the building of the Baldacchino, both in terms of their shared patronage of Pope Urban VIII (1623–44, born Maffeo Barberini) and the symbolism that is intrinsic to these three moments (Freiberg 1995: 184–5, n. 44; Kirwin 1997: 83; Harper 1999: 324–38). Employing the imagery of the Temple of Solomon and the heavenly Jerusalem, both the dedication and the Baldacchino presented the same symbolic reading of Urban VIII's interventions in the new basilica. The jubilee, in turn, presented the entire city of Rome as a figure of the Holy City. Here, I will argue that this symbolism was brought to the forefront and particularized in the procession of the arch-confraternity of the Rosary that took place during the Jubilee of 1625, when an *apparato* very similar to the Baldacchino was carried through the streets of Rome. Through a shared architectural imagery, the *apparato* announced the specific themes that were to be conveyed by the interventions then planned for the dedication of the church and the building of the Baldacchino.

As I hope to show, the analogy between dedication rite and building that was "activated" in the procession served to express not only the claim that Saint Peter's was indeed a figure of the heavenly Jerusalem, but also, much more specifically, that Barberini-Rome, with the consecrated church at its center, was its pre-eminent incarnation and Urban VIII its prophetic ruler. The expression of this message hinged not only on the adoption of a specific architectural iconography and the selection of a precise set of historical and religious ideas that informed each of these three "moments," but also on the development of forms of expression that pointed towards higher, ineffable ideas through the spectacular perfection of artifice. Just like all three "events" discussed here—the procession, the dedication, and the building of the Baldacchino—rely upon a common imagery, so they share the ambition to provoke similar aesthetic experiences.

The dedication of the new Basilica in 1626

The Old Testament accounts of Solomon's Temple pay as much attention to the planning and the construction of the building as to its dedication (1 Kings 6–8; 2 Chronicles 3–5; Ezekiel 40–4). Paradoxically, it is the interruption of the ritual that signals God's acceptance of his new dwelling. The cloud shrouding his majesty upon his entering the temple renders any activity or even human presence impossible. In that moment, the building's precise construction, represented in the elaborate set of measures detailed in the biblical description, and the earthly magnificence of its interior decoration, give way to an ineffable and awe-inspiring presence exceeding the limits of language and art. The architectural historian Christine Smith has indicated that the Christian liturgy for the consecration of the church associates the physical edifice of the church with the image of heavenly Jerusalem from the Book of Revelation which, in turn, had Solomon's temple as one of its prefigurations. Smith points out that the epistle read at the consecration Mass is taken from Revelation 21, describing the descent of the heavenly city. Thus, Smith suggests, "this liturgy assumes, and affirms, that there are indeed places on earth where heaven is revealed and where the creature and creator are together as they will be in the heavenly Kingdom" (Smith 2000: 71).

This new city is poetically described in the so-called dedication hymn, *Urbs beata Ierusalem*. It portrays Jerusalem as a vision of peace built from the living stones of the faithful, descending from heaven on earth like a bride entering her nuptial chamber, or *thalamus*. The hymn evokes the role of the master builder at great length, and his artifice is praised as he constructs his holy edifice, walled with gold and gems, on the cornerstone of Christ (Plumpe 1943: 12; Ashworth 1956; Stookey 1969). How this ideal precious building serves as a mirror for the actual physical church, the institution of the Catholic Church, and its heavenly model, the Jerusalem of Revelation, is well illustrated in an emblem from a collection composed by Principio Fabrizi in honor of Pope Gregory XIII (1572–85), entitled *Allusioni, et imprese sopra l'arme di Gregorio Papa XIII* (Fabrizi 1588; Courtright 2003: 13, 26) (Figure 6.1). The emblem takes the first line (*incipit*) of the dedication hymn as its motto and has a small domed church (a reference to the *cappella gregoriana* in St Peter's) as its image (*imago*). It is, according to the legend "the symbol of the church triumphant and militant, and the Roman pontiff, in imitation of the heavenly Jerusalem, as is described in Revelation 21." In the sonnet that completes the emblem, the church is described as a stunning compendium of the most precious materials, the heavenly image of a resplendent edifice. Marginal annotations gloss each of these elements as one constituent part of the Church and its history. The emblem thus identifies the particular architecture of the *cappella* with the artifice of the Temple and, as such, renders it prone to metaphorical interpretation: through its artifice, the building becomes an image of the Catholic Church.

As an evocation of the intricate link between building, the institution of the Church and the heavenly kingdom, the hymn pithily synthesizes the symbolism of the dedication rite as a whole. Through a complicated liturgy that fuses rites of baptism, exorcism and burial, the dedication of a church progressively defines it as a space of worship. Psalms, antiphons and short declamations establish the link between the rite, the building, its first model of the Temple, and its final fulfillment in the form of Jerusalem. The rite is therefore as essential a part of a church building as its walls, columns or altars (*DS* v.4: c.388; Durandus 1843: 111–36, 234–41; Trudu 2001). By constructing the members of a worshipping body, the rite transforms the dead mass of the building into an animated conglomerate.

The *Pontificale*, compiled by Charles Borromeo and Pius IV and published in 1561, prescribes a uniform dedication liturgy for every new church in Catholicism. But churches have been consecrated ever since the first centuries of Christianity and the dedication rite was considered a sacrament as early as the ninth century (Repsher 1998: 17–34). Church dedications obviously took place regardless of a building's specific architectural features. In other words, the metaphorical transfer in the dedication rite of the Temple or the heavenly Jerusalem onto the building was not predicated upon a specific design or shape to its architecture. Yet there are certain instances where liturgy and building were made to resonate so as to reinforce the association between church and Temple. A famous example of such "resonance" is the analogy between the numerical structure of Guillaume Dufay's motet *Nuper rosarum flores*, composed for and sung at the consecration of the Duomo of Florence in 1436, and the biblical descriptions of the Solomonic Temple (Wright 1994). It has been argued that this analogy can be extended to the building itself, both on grounds of the proportions of its ground plan and of typological references (Trachtenberg 2001).

A tapestry from the series commissioned by Cardinal Francesco Barberini to commemorate the glorious actions of Francesco's papal uncle, Urban VIII, suggests a similar resonance between dedication ritual and building (Figure 6.2). The tapestry shows the pope performing the dedication of new Saint Peter's (Johnston *et al.* 1986: no. 48; Harper 1999: 293–339, 560, no. 1.6.a; Bertrand 2005: 59 and f. 79). The pontiff is inscribing the Latin and Greek alphabets in two intersecting stripes of ashes on the church floor, the first part


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VRBS · BEATA · HIERVSALEM.

Hym. in Dedic. Baſil.

Triumphantis, & militãtis eccleſiæ, ac Rom. Pont. ſymbolum. ad imitationẽ cæleſtis Hieruſalem, quæ habetur Apocal. 21. ad quam &c.

C V I.

Queſto gran Tempio, che col Ciel confina, — Eccleſia Catholica.
Hà d'Oſtro, Argento, e Smalto i Fondamenti, — Martyres Chriſti.
D'Alabaſtro i Pareti, e gli Ornamenti — DD. Confeſſores.
Fan d'intorno apparer luce diuina. — Dona Spiritus ſancti.
La Porta Oriental' à cui s'inchina — Confeſſio.
Ciò, c'han ſotto gli Heroi del Ciel più ardenti — Omnis aĩa Chriſtiana.
E de Topatij; e dentro hà traſparenti — Spes vitæ æternæ.
Perle, ch'à pochi il Ciel dona, e deſtina. — Sacramenta.
Il Fronteſpicio è sì lucente, e vago — Fides Catholica.
Con le fineſtre d'Hebano, e Piropo, — Apoſtoli, ſeu duæ Chriſti naturæ.
Che la materia vince il Magiſtero. — Ouid.
Il Tetto, ou'è quella celeſte Imago, — Cuſtodia Dei, & Rom. Pont.
Che ſplende à queſto, e à quell'altro Hemiſpero — Eccl. Latinæ, & Grecæ.
E d'oro à cui non è paragon' vopo. — Claudian. in deſcript. Mineruæ.

Figure 6.1 Principio Fabrizi, *Allusioni, et imprese sopra l'arme di Gregorio Papa XIII*, emblem 106. B.A.V. Capponi. IV, p. 159. © Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana.

of the dedication ritual to take place inside the church (Sodi and Triacca 1997: 315–19). The ashen cross is laid out to span the whole surface of the building, forming the monogram *chi*, thereby declaring Christ to be the church's foundation; the two alphabets proclaim the universality of the church by using Greek and Latin and by marking beginning and end, *alpha* and *omega* (Dubosq 1948: 83–4, 96–100). The laying out of the cross and the even spacing of the letters is a way to measure and delineate the church, recalling Ezekiel's vision of the angel setting out the measures of the Temple and, as such, a meditative act of contrition and "return to God" (Carruthers 2000: 232).

Behind the celebrants towers the Baldacchino as we know it today. This scene contains an obvious anachronism. Urban VIII performed the dedication on November 18, 1626, supposedly exactly 1,300 years after Pope Sylvester I dedicated old Saint Peter's (Pollak 1931: 97–100; Thelen 1967: 16 n. 24; Hammond 1994: app. 11; Fagiolo dell'Arco 1997: 267).[1] At the time of the dedication the Baldacchino was still a project; the only visible intervention on the site of the crossing was the raising of the main altar consecrated by Clement VIII (1592–1605).[2] Work on the altar had begun in 1625 and coincided with the building of the Baldacchino's foundations. In the same year, the contracts for the manufacturing of the Baldachino's four bronze columns were drawn up.[3] Moreover, in November 1626, the Baldacchino was also meant to follow

Figure 6.2 Pope Urban VIII Consecrates the Basilica of St Peter, 1671–3. Tapestry in silk and wool, 400 x 519 cm. Musei Vaticani (Inv. no. 3923).

a different design: it was to be crowned with an open dome carrying a statue of the risen Christ. An angel standing on each column would be holding aloft the baldachin roof (Spagnolo 2000) (Figures 6.3 and 6.4).

By showing the dedication rite of 1626 at the foot of the Baldacchino that was built from 1626 to 1633, the tapestry suggests a connection between the church's consecration and the erection of the bronze tabernacle: together they are Urban VIII's crowning achievements in Saint Peter's. This conflation in the tapestry of the 1670s may reflect an older association of the dedication rite with the building of the Baldacchino, since at least two accounts of the ceremony and one contemporary poem, discussed below, mention the dedication and the Baldacchino together as Urban's final touch to the new basilica (Pollak 1931: 98, 99; Gigli 1994: 89–90).[4]

One must ask whether the connection of the dedication to the Baldacchino is more than a mere matter of chronology; whether, for Urban VIII, the construction of the Baldacchino was an act akin to dedicating the basilica. If, as the tapestry suggests, the Baldacchino, like the dedication ritual, exemplified the transition from an unfinished construction to a perfected building, it may well activate similar metaphorical interpretations of its architecture: that Urban VIII was creating the perfect shrine, in ritual and architecture, to occupy the liminal space between the human and the divine, to represent the living community of the faithful. In support of this view, it is worth remembering that the design of the Baldacchino is derived from the ceremonial device of the portable baldachin that was used to cover the pope or the host during processions (Lavin 1968: 5–6). The incorporation of this typology casts the construction as pertaining to a particular moment in time; yet simultaneously, the Baldacchino clearly presents itself as a permanent construction. The dialectic between ephemeral architecture (and concomitantly, the event) and permanent, expressed in the Baldacchino's very design, suggests a solidifying of the temporary or the contingent into the eternal. Since the dedication ritual performs a similar transformation, the Baldacchino could be read as a monument to the consecration.

The Jubilee of 1625

To understand what the association of the permanent Baldacchino with the dedication celebration contributes to its meaning as a work of architecture, we must first turn to another moment that is explicitly referenced by the construction. On the base of the Baldacchino, several small objects have been cast into the bronze. Among these are three medals, one attached to a rosary. Their inscriptions date them to the Holy Year of 1625, the second year of Urban VIII's pontificate (Kirwin 1997: 141–3 and f. 85), before the Baldacchino was actually built.[5] The issues at play during the Holy Year—both in general and particularly in 1625—are an important frame of reference for the ideas underpinning the Baldacchino. More specifically, one particular event that took place during the 1625 jubilee revealed how the Barberini family interpreted

Figure 6.3 The first project for the Baldacchino, as reconstructed from a medal of 1626, in: Filippo Bonanni, *Numismata summorum pontificum templi vaticani fabricam indicantia, chronologica ejusdem fabricae narratione, ac multiplici eruditione explicata*. Rome: Typographia Georgii Plachi, 1715, plate 50. © Ghent University, Central Library.

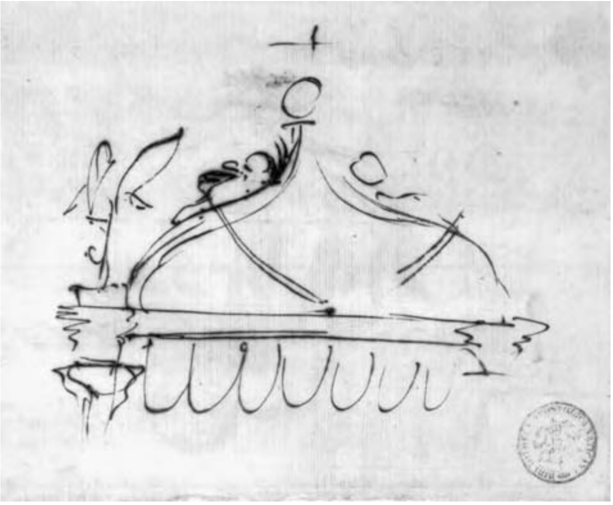


Figure 6.4
Gianlorenzo Bernini, Design for the superstructure of the Baldacchino, ink on paper. Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Barb. Lat. 9900, fol. 2. © Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana.

and appropriated those ideas and connected their views to the architectural elements to be deployed in the Baldacchino.

As with any jubilee year, Rome in 1625 became a figure for the Holy City of Jerusalem. The earthly Jerusalem, then in the Turkish sphere of influence and thus understood to be out of Christian reach, acted as a metaphor for its heavenly counterpart, the city of peace, described in the dedication hymn *Urbs beata Ierusalem* which was intoned at the Christmas eve opening the Holy Year and again at its closing (Thurston 1900: 41–2, 235–6).[6] Texts produced for the jubilee play on the analogy between pilgrimage and crusade, between travel and spiritual progress. A visit to Rome was not only a metaphor for a pilgrimage to a liberated earthly Jerusalem, but also prefigured the coming about of the heavenly city of peace described in the Book of Revelation (*DS*, v.13: c.1068–9; Gatti Perrer and Martini 1983; Fagiolo and Madonna 1985; Labrot 1997: 279, 331–5). Or, as was written about a view of Rome published for the 1575 jubilee:

> Thou hast here, Christian reader, a portraiture of the City of Rome, not that City which is constituted of hills and open spaces, and the magnificence of public buildings, but that which is spiritually built up of Christian virtues and grows into a "Holy City, coming down out of heaven from God, and having the glory of God" (Apoc. 21, 10–11).
>
> (Thurston 1900: 257)

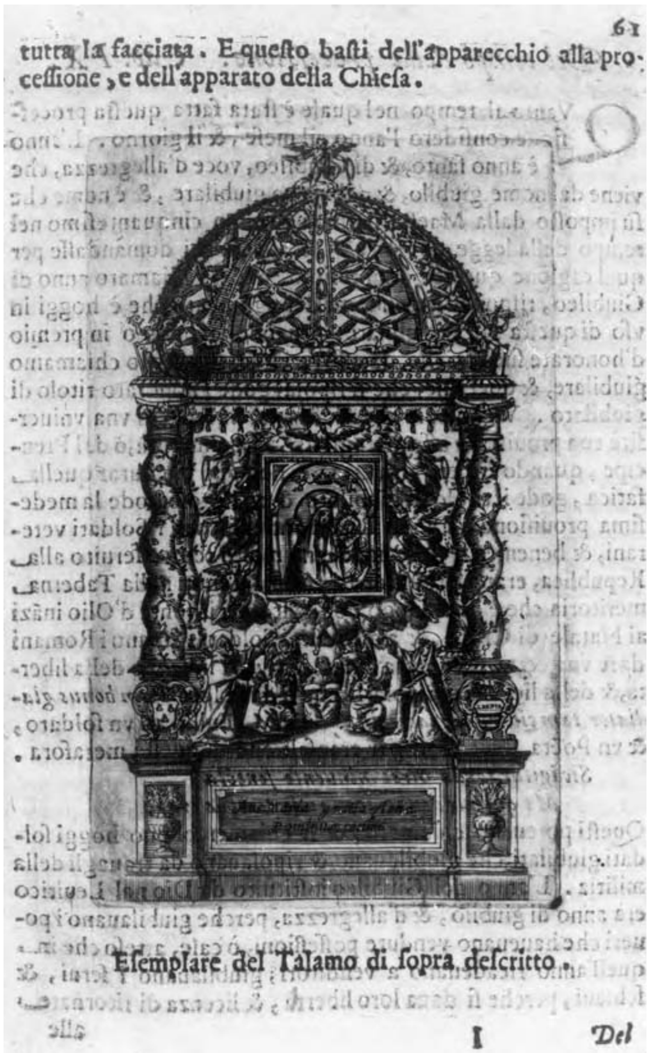
A guidebook written for the Holy Year 1600 and republished in 1625, *I tesori nascosti dell'alma città di Roma*, explicitly explained the relation between what pilgrims could see in Rome—the monuments of Christianity and the ruins of antiquity—and the true but invisible treasures indicated by these visible signs: the splendor of Christian monuments offer a glimpse of heaven, and the ruins of antiquity set the stage for that splendor to shine forth with all its might (Panciroli 1625: 10–11).

In 1625, the general idea that Rome during the jubilee year was a figure for the distant and simultaneously higher reality of Jerusalem, was cast by Urban VIII and the members of his family in specific terms. The concept of the crusade, the prime model of holy war and a key model for the pilgrim's voyage during the jubilee, was central to this endeavor. As was already apparent in his choice of name, modeled on Urban II (1088–99) who instigated the first crusade, Urban VIII liked to see himself as a holy warrior (Boucher 1623), and in 1625 this aspect of his *persona* was widely propagated. For instance, the pope was particularly pleased to celebrate the ceremonial opening of the Porta Santa with the crown prince Wadislaw of Poland, a self-proclaimed champion of the war against the Swedish Protestants and the Turks. But, as Maria-Antonietta Visceglia has demonstrated, Urban's eager evocation of the crusade, or indeed the expression of his de facto unattainable ambition to organize a quest to conquer Jerusalem, mainly served to justify papal policy by casting the contemporary political and military situation of the papacy in eschatological terms (Visceglia 1997). The situation of 1625 called for some convenient propaganda, with the Papal States embroiled in the Valtellina crisis, a military conflict that threatened the safety of Rome itself. Many contemporary sources, like the diary of Giacinto Gigli for the year 1625, are replete with references to the military situation, and to Urban's attempts to build up an impressive military apparatus (Gigli 1994: 145, 152; Kirwin 1997: 43–53; Harper 1999: 419–51; Delbeke 2004a: 124, 247–50).

This conflation of the eschatological and the historical, effected in the jubilee of Urban VIII, forms the background for that year's celebration of the victory in Lepanto, a key symbol of the holy war. On the first Sunday of October 1625, the procession of *Archiconfraternità del SS. Rosario* took to the streets of Rome (Fagiolo and Madonna 1985: 145; Hammond 1994: 259, app. 7; Fagiolo dell'Arco 1997: 262; *Roma Splendidissima*: no. 29). This annual rite commemorated the miraculous intervention of the Virgin during the naval battle of Lepanto of 1571, where a Christian fleet under the command of Marc'Antonio Colonna defeated the Turks. In reward, Pope Pius V (1566–72) gave Colonna two copies of a Solomonic column (Perkins 1952: 31). Gregory XIII transformed the commemoration of the victory at Lepanto, instated by Pius V, into a public veneration of the rosary. The function was assigned to the existing arch-confraternity of the rosary at the Dominican church of Santa Maria sopra Minerva. According to some early modern historians, the arch-confraternity, whose activities now concerned charitable and devotional activities, had its origins in a Christian military order (Moroni 1840–61, v.2: 299; v.12, 144; v.49, 154–7). Such origins would reinforce the militant message of the fusion of the traditional veneration of the rosary and the commemoration of the naval battle enacted in the yearly procession.

The procession of 1625 is recorded in an exceptionally detailed account (*relazione*), penned by the Dominican superior of the monastery of Santa Maria sopra Minerva, Ambrosio Brandi (Diez 1986: 14–15; Nussdorfer 1998: 457–8). In this text, Brandi duly stresses the close alliance between devotional and military means to safeguard the Christian religion. For this reason, the chronicler is particularly pleased that the procession, the second important public manifestation of the arch-confraternity during the jubilee,[7] took place under the patronage of Carlo Barberini, General of the Church and brother of Urban VIII, who commissioned the centerpiece of the procession, a *talamo* or shrine (Brandi 1625: 56) (Figure 6.5).

Brandi's account and Gigli's *Diario di Roma*, together with an engraving included in the account, allow us to visualize the construction (Appendix 1).


61

tutta la facciata. E queſto baſti dell'apparecchio alla proceſſione, e dell'apparato della Chieſa.

Eſemplare del Talamo di ſopra deſcritto.

I Del

Figure 6.5
Orazio Torriani, *Talamo* for the procession of the arch-confraternity of the Rosary, from Brandi 1625: 61. Photo by author.

It is made after a design by the "military and civil" architect Orazio Torriani (Brandi 1625: 56–7). The *talamo* consisted of four columns "in the shape of those from the temple of Solomon, and which are now to be seen in the church of the Vatican," placed in a square of 16 *palmi* (3.5 meters) on each side. The columns, coated with silver, supported concave architraves decorated with tasseled hangings, which supported a "crown" made from eight ribs ornamented with silver, gems and flowers (Brandi 1625: 57). The construction formed a shrine more than 32.5 *palmi* (7.15 meters) high for the painting of the Madonna del Rosario, traditionally attributed to Fra Angelico (Brandi 1625: 49–53, 57; Pasti 1985). The painting was placed—"*resideva con molta maestà*" (Brandi 1625: 58)—in a crowned frame carried by a gilded cloud, "as in a tabernacle" (Gigli 1994: 149), venerated by six angels holding roses, flowers and crowns. Above the painting, the dove of the Holy Ghost hovered "amidst golden rays that exhume great devotion and transmit it to all beholders" (Brandi 1625: 58). The painting of Mary was revered by life-size and clothed sculptures of Saints Catherine and Dominic. An angel stood atop each twisted column and the summit of the dome.

According to the official account, because the talamo was the size "of a chapel," it seemed that only heavenly assistance could see it safely through the streets of Rome. Thus guarded, the shrine flawlessly followed a trajectory that led from S. Maria sopra Minerva, via the Palazzo Cesarini, the Church of the Gesù, the Corso, the fittingly decorated Arco di Portogallo and Palazzo Borghese, and then via S. Luigi dei Francesi back to the mother church (Brandi 1625: 83–8). Before the talamo entered S. Maria sopra Minerva, the architect had it turned around, so that the construction now faced the piazza in front of the church. This way, when it was installed in the middle of the church, the painting of the Virgin could be admired from outside through the open church doors. The shrine remained in place for a week, in an appropriately decorated church, together with a depiction of the battle of Lepanto that had also been carried in the procession. On the octave of the feast of the Rosary, Urban VIII himself visited the church (Brandi 1625: 91).

Thus, the association of the Barberini family with the procession and its message was established on multiple levels. Not only did Carlo Barberini, the General of the Church order the shrine from its architect Torriani, but elements taken from the Barberini coats of arms or heraldry figured prominently on the structure. Brandi writes how the tasseled hangings "*a uso di baldacchino*" were painted with roses and bees, the symbol of the Barberini, "who bestowed grace upon all the family." These heraldic images were visible signs of the devotion of the Barberini for the Virgin. With the procession, Brandi continues, the Barberini "have shown themselves to be bees so devoted to the flowers and roses of the most holy Mary, to whom they, because of their devotion, have constructed the beautiful and artful beehive [*alveo*] of this shrine [*talamo*]."[8]

Brandi's choice of words here indicates that the identification of the Barberini family with the celebration of the Virgin—and with Lepanto—ran much deeper than the mere presence of their heraldic symbols would suggest. By equating the shrine with a beehive, Brandi compares the tabernacle of the Virgin with the house of the Barberini, while evoking the semantic parentage of the two terms: *alveo* not only signifies beehive, but it also means a tent, treasure trove or indeed, a womb, calling on an old and almost suppressed meaning of the word *talamo*. Brandi's simile cast the Barberini not only as exemplary followers of the Virgin, but also as the builders and guardians of her shrine, to the point that the house of Barberini—the hive—*is* also the shrine of the Madonna del Rosario. Participating in the widely spread practice to employ the heraldic bees of the Barberini as metaphors for political or religious ideas (Lavin 1999; Weddigen 1999), Brandi thus proposed a complete identification of the cause of the Virgin with that of the Barberini family.

The house of the Barberini and the Virgin assumed a shape that strikingly resembles the Baldacchino: both structures consist essentially of four twisted columns carrying a dome that rests on an architrave. As Brandi points out, the design of the columns alluded to eleven spiral pillars that were traditionally considered to have been a part of the Temple in Jerusalem. These columns had been in Saint Peter's at least since the fourth century and formed part of multiple arrangements for the apse and the main altar in the old basilica (Lavin 1968: 14–16; Nobiloni 1997; Tuzi 2002). Between 1633 and 1640, they were integrated in the decoration of the piers supporting the dome, framing the balconies on which the basilica's most important relics were shown on special occasions. These small stone columns served as models for the gigantic bronze versions composing the Baldacchino; the choice of material generating an additional link to the Temple, referencing the bronze shafts kept in Saint John in the Lateran, also considered to be Temple fragments (Lavin 1968: 16–17). In Brandi's description, the association of the Temple with the talamo is reinforced through the author's insistence on the shrine's dimensions and materials, a generic feature of architectural descriptions of religious buildings harking back to the accounts in Kings and Ezekiel (Arnulf 2004), and through the enumeration of different precious stones shining from the structure, reminiscent of the gems decorating the Solomonic structure.

Whether the patently formal resemblance between the talamo and the Baldacchino identify the talamo as a model, a copy or a derivative of a project for the Baldacchino is a matter of some debate (Lavin 1973; Fagiolo dell' Arco 1997: 76; Fagiolo (1997), v.1: 74–6, 164; Marder 1997: 300, n. 149). But regardless of questions of design process or authorship, the resemblance imposes a number of observations. A year and a half before the unveiling of the columns to the Baldacchino in Saint Peter's on June 29, 1627, a remarkably similar structure was carried through the streets of Rome to what was, by all accounts, a huge audience. Moreover, this "preview" occurred within the context of the commemoration of the victory of Lepanto during a jubilee year. This commemoration was firmly associated with the Barberini's own claims on religious militancy, not in the least because the family so strongly identified itself with the very tabernacle of the Virgin carried around in the procession. There, the evocation of the Temple in the architecture of the talamo must have served to reinforce the memory of Jerusalem, the city waiting to be freed from the Turks, and to give focus to the desires of Christians eager to wage war against the infidel.

As the shape of the talamo prefigured the yet-to-be-built Baldacchino, this message foreshadowed ideas that would be read into the bronze construction on its unveiling. Like the portable shrine, the Baldacchino was intimately associated with warfare, since it was said to have been produced from the same material and in the same foundry as the cannons for the papal troops (Fraschetti 1900: 59–62; Kirwin 1997: 41–78). Contemporary panegyric employed this fact almost ad nauseam to cast the Baldacchino as a machine of holy war. An epigram penned by Lelio Guidiccioni in 1639 saw the construction as the model or prototype of the shrine that would be erected on the site of the Temple once Jerusalem was freed and humanity once again united under God (Newman and Stickney Newman 1992: 264–5). The device *Non plus ultra* ("None higher") has often been associated with the Baldacchino's columns, to compare Urban VIII's building of the shrine with Hercules' demarcation of the world accessible to man (Schütze 1994: 235–7). With this in mind, it is not hard to imagine that the Baldacchino's evocation of Jerusalem brought to mind the cry of pilgrims on their way to the Holy Land: "*plus oultre*" ("ever further") (Rosenthal 1971: 222).

The Baldacchino

The procession of 1625 made an extraordinary impact—to the extent that, when the arch-confraternity's procession during the next jubilee of 1650 floundered, the description of the talamo of 1625 was reprinted to substitute the record of its failed successor.[9] If the impact of this temporary shrine's passage through the streets of Rome was so deeply etched in the collective memory of the city, it is worth asking whether the procession of 1625 prefigured aspects of the yet-to-be-built Baldacchino—other, that is, than the message expressed by their common architectural iconography. If so, which? More precisely, did the talamo's obvious formal analogies with the Baldacchino only serve to help identify the themes that the bronze tabernacle was to ultimately communicate, or did the two constructions also share something in terms of their visual and emotional effect on the masses of people thronging the streets of Rome and visiting the Basilica of St Peter's? To answer this question, I will turn to a text written for the Baldacchino's dedication on June 29, 1633. Lelio Guidiccioni's *Ara Maxima Vaticana*, a long laudatory poem dedicated to Urban VIII, allows us to see that the Baldacchino, like the talamo, didn't merely evoke the Temple by incorporating certain formal elements but, by means of a splendor and artistry reminiscent of the Solomonic temple and the heavenly Jerusalem, generated a response similar to the awe felt by those witnessing the passage of the talamo.

Lelio Guidiccioni was a *letterato* and courtier who first gravitated around the Borghese, where he authored a description of the catafalque of Pope Paul V (1605–22) (Fagiolo dell'Arco 1997: 235–40). He subsequently became part of the Barberini circles, entering the household of Antonio Barberini. His *Ara Maxima Vaticana* was but one of the pieces he wrote to celebrate Urban VIII's patronage, but it was by far the most extensive (DBI: vol. 61, 330–4; Kirwin 1997: 205–20; Ferrari 2004: 61–3).

An elaborate dedication to the pope and a much shorter address to the reader, concluding with three epigrams on the baldachin, introduce the poem (Guidiccioni 1633).[10] The *Ara Maxima Vaticana* itself opens with an exhortation to revere Saint Peter's and the Baldacchino and then proceeds to praise the Virgin Mary and the apostles Peter and Paul, founders of the Church who give way to Urban VIII, the present ruler of Rome. Urban's career as a cardinal active in European diplomacy and in the congregation overseeing the Vatican basilica is remembered. Guidiccioni then offers a brief history of the Vatican site, harking back to the dark days of the Emperor Nero before recounting Constantine's construction of Old Saint Peter's and the decision of Julius II to rebuild the church. Urban VIII's crowning contribution to the basilica's building history encompasses the dedication rite and the construction of the Baldacchino, which Guidiccioni describes energetically and in great detail (Ara: 547–604). A long section recalls the royal honors that have been bestowed upon Saint Peter's, culminating in an exhortation of the "awesomeness" of the church that truly embodies its position "*ad limina*," on the threshold between the human and divine spheres (Ara: 605–759). This position, Guidiccioni proceeds, has found its full realization "under the princedom of Urban." Again, the Baldacchino is praised, now as one of all the good works that Urban has performed for Rome, such as the restoration of churches, the expansion of the Quirinal palace or the extermination of famine, and especially the construction of new defenses and the molding of new cannons (Ara: 831–48). The poem culminates with an exalted evocation of the bronze shrine and concludes with a celebration of Urban's most splendid achievement, his mastery of eloquence and poetry.

For our present argument, the *Ara Maxima Vaticana* is important on three interconnected counts. The poem indicates that the typological analogy between the talamo and the Baldacchino (systematically called a *thalamus* in the poem) points towards a common and rich reservoir of meanings associated with the tabernacle and shrine; that these shrines, through their artistry, material, effect and meaning, refer to the biblical prototypes evoked in the church's dedication rite; and that such shrines are erected not only by means of architecture but also through liturgy, song and poetry, and that all these forms of expression are presided over by the demiurgical prophet-king, Urban VIII.

In the very opening line of the poem's dedication, Guidiccioni describes the Baldacchino as "*Arae thalamum*" or the "perfect shrine." Immediately, he explains the meaning of the word *thalamus*, "For God indeed long lay hidden deep in the Virgin's womb, and from that womb He made a chamber [*thalamus*] for himself and a Divine Treasury, to which Heaven's palace yields" (Ara: 140–2). This allows the reader (or listener) to fully understand his final exhortation of the Baldacchino at the end of the poem:

> and at last amid these gentle pastimes of kindly peace [*Astraea*] would see the burning beauties of the heavenly ones molded from Corinthian bronze, statues sweet with speech; and that revered Chamber [*thalamus*], and the columns set at the behest of a better Hercules, columns beyond which it is not lawful for human labors to hope to approach by any enterprises.
> (Ara: 868–73)

The Baldacchino is cast simultaneously as a shrine and treasury, a protective structure housing the most holy of prizes.

In the course of the poem, the Baldacchino—as the perfect shrine—serves as a figure for Saint Peter's, Rome, Jerusalem and indeed all of Christianity, taking on the same figural meanings associated with the Solomonic temple and the heavenly Jerusalem of Revelation. All of these associations revolve around the identification of the tabernacle with the Virgin Mary, both as shrine erected in her honor and as a building representing her as a figure of the Mother Church (Ara: 927–30; Müller 1955; Hirn 1958). In this respect, it is worth remembering that the word *talamo* or *thalamus* could mean both "bedchamber," opening up possible associations with Mary's body or womb, and canopy or baldachin, referring rather to the shrine appropriate for a sacred object or person. This ambiguity was strong enough for the nineteenth-century publisher of Sforza Pallavicino's seventeenth-century biography of Pope Alexander VII to feel the need to explain in detail that, when Pallavicino wrote that Christina of Sweden attended mass in Saint Peter's seated in a talamo (in all likeliness erected right next to the Baldacchino), the author most definitely did not have a nuptial bed in mind (Pallavicino 1839–40 v.1: 422–25).

If Guidiccioni's ample references to the precious material and stupefying artistry of the Baldacchino (Dedication: 79–88; Ara: 581–604, 796–821) can be read as invocations of the biblical prototypes of the Temple and the heavenly Jerusalem, his description of the work as that "beyond which it is not lawful for human labors to hope to approach" suggest that the Baldacchino represents the limit of what is humanly possible. An astounding feat, it is accomplished by the ultimate demiurge, Pope Urban VIII. Urban, Guidiccioni writes, not only designed the construction but he created the artist who brought the pope's sublime idea into existence (Dedication: 88–99; Ara: 1–18). In their commentary on the poem, Newman and Stickney Newman have pointed out the extent to which Guidiccioni stresses the animating powers of Urban VIII, his ability to enliven dead matter and thus to inspire visitors—faithful and unfaithful alike—with unprecedented awe (Ara: 764–6; Newman and Stickney Newman 1992: 51–2, 55–6). On this ground, the basilica of Saint Peter's and Urban VIII share the quality of majesty, an attribute of the priest-king or *sacerdos*, "the new Founder" (Reader: 22; Ara: 354–9). It is Urban VIII alone who carefully tallies, selects and arranges not only the stone and marble of Saint Peter's, but also the bronze of the Baldacchino. This craftsmanship in turn serves as an image for his tallying of the soul of every Christian in his flock, to form the harmonious, peaceful and well-arranged Church described in the dedication hymn.

As we have seen, Guidiccioni posits Urban VIII's mastery of the spoken and sung word at the summit of the pontiff's achievements. Urban's creative energy extends to all forms of expression, establishing a fundamental analogy between every artifact produced under his aegis. The synergy between the Baldacchino and sacred poetry, suggested by Guidiccioni (Ara: 56–60, 886–7), is made explicit in a contemporary poem on sacred art, the *Poetica Sacra* (Ciampoli 1648: 235–350; see Delbeke 2004b: 91–3). There, the courtier and *letterato* Giovanni Ciampoli presents the Baldacchino both as the perfect subject matter for holy poetry, and as its visual counterpart. In its artifice, Ciampoli writes, the Baldacchino reaches the limits of human endeavor. Just like the new sacred poetry, it is a fundamental re-invention of all preceding examples, conceived by Urban VIII. Just like a sacred poem, the construction mediates between the earthly and the heavenly spheres (Ciampoli 1648: 341).

Like Guidiccioni, Ciampoli saw a fundamental analogy between the visual arts, poetry and liturgy in the communication of the intangible truths of faith. He repeatedly stresses how the right application of poetry will produce "sacred hymns" and "harmony in the temple" to lure the faithful into the papal fold (Ciampoli 1648: 330–42). In the *Ara Maxima Vaticana*, Guidiccioni similarly suggests that Urban VIII's poetic prowess serves to raise the dignity and indeed the effect of liturgy, as much as his Baldacchino perfects liturgical space, "Your new order of worship and most gentle laws have made you an Augustus" (Ara: 893–4). The bronze shrine houses "the Altar, where alone that Priest [*Divina Sacerdos*] fulfills the divine rites, . . . the foundation of [Urban's] rites [*sacris fundamina vestris*]" (Ara: 47–52). Because Urban is at once the author of the Baldacchino (and by extension, of Saint Peter's) and the priest-king, the building of the cathedral and Catholic ritual are rooted in the same authority, and both exert a similar effect on the beholder, who is "drawn into the awe of the Roman rite" (Dedication: 50). Guidiccioni even invokes the "secret utterances" of the angels standing on the four columns of the Baldacchino (Ara: 13–14) as reminiscent of "the harpings of the prophetic king" Moses, a model of Urban VIII himself (Ara: 900, 914–15).

Thus, Guidiccioni offers an at least partly liturgical, or perhaps more generally, ritual framework for Urban VIII's by now well-documented *persona* of poet-pope (Fumaroli 1978; Schütze 1994; Weddigen 1999; Castagnetti 2003; Rietbergen 2006: 95–142). Guidiccioni's representation of Urban finds support in the pope's own extension of his poetic interest to the texts of liturgy. He ordered and supervised the rewriting of the hymns of the Roman breviary by a Jesuit trio, the fathers Strada, Sarbiewski and Petrucci. Their aim was to fuse traditional worship with the literary forms of the antique Golden Age (Allacci 1633: 14–15; Baumer 1905 v.2: 285–94; Springhetti 1968). After being approved by the Congregation of Rites in 1629, the new hymns were to be set to suitable music. The first, unsuccessful attempt was by Filippo Vitali, who graced his 1636 volume of hymns with a frontispiece framed by the Baldacchino, according to an established convention (Hammond 1994: 177–80 f. 50).[11] Allegri's final revision would appear in Antwerp in 1644.

Conclusion

A comparison of Brandi's description of the *talamo*, Guidiccioni's poem and the dedication liturgy suggests that particular manifestations of devotional practices, such as the 1625 procession, and of liturgical rites, such as the 1626 dedication, can contribute to our understanding of the meaning of a work of religious architecture, such as the Baldacchino, and its intended effect. These moments, and the ephemeral, visual or literal artifacts they engender—such as Torriani's *talamo*, Brandi's *relazioni*, or Guidiccioni's laudatory poem—contribute to, and to a certain extent construct, the perception of the Baldacchino's more permanent architecture. I have suggested that the interaction between the Baldacchino and the texts, events and rituals surrounding it operated on three interconnected levels: first, by sharing specific themes and expressing those themes with similar images associated with the same patron or author; second, by staging successive "previews" of these images and recording and disseminating these previews in ritual, text and image; and finally, by sharing a similar effect on the beholder, brought about by an awe-inspiring artistry. This shared effect establishes a fundamental parentage between the different arts and practices involved: ephemeral and permanent architecture, poetry, music and ritual—all of these are placed, in this case, under the tutelage of the *artifex* Urban VIII.

The central role played by Urban VIII and his family of the Barberini, in associating these different events and forms of expression, establishes this case study as a highly specific probe into the more general question posed at the beginning of this chapter: namely how, in seventeenth-century Rome, ephemeral architecture and the celebrations that occasioned it helped to establish the meaning of more permanent architecture. Moreover, the argument presented here hinges to an important degree on a particular correspondence between the talamo and the Baldacchino in terms of their design and effect. In that sense, this case study might be only a fortuitous exception. Yet it would not be difficult to find similar constellations in which one or a group of patrons employ various events and art forms to express and appropriate well-defined ideas or agendas, and such constellations would certainly involve interactions between ephemeral and permanent architectures similar to the ones discussed here. For instance, Pope Alexander VII (1655–67) associated his name and public persona with several Marian shrines all over Europe, by means of comparable constellations of permanent architecture, ephemeral constructions, rituals, texts and images.

On a more general level, the analogy between the talamo, the Baldacchino and the dedication rite operates against a theoretical background still deeply indebted to the views on the symbolic significance of religious architecture proposed, most systematically, by Wilhelmus Durandus in his *Rationale divinorum* *officiorum* written around 1280 and frequently printed from the fifteenth century onwards. Durandus considered the church building to be one component of the apparatus accommodating worship, and thus invested architecture with a symbolic charge similar to that of liturgy. His writings continue to be important for our understanding of the meaning of religious architecture, and the fundamental parentage between architecture and ritual on a symbolic level. Seventeenth-century Rome saw the publication of Durandus's ideas in an elaborate update by Giovanni Bona in 1663, the *Rerum liturgicarum libri duo* (Bona 1747–53). It is probably no accident that, as Bona recalls in his foreword, the treatise came into being on the urging of his friend Sforza Pallavicino, one of the foremost intellectuals of the Barberini era and the theoretician of the literary practices of Guidiccioni, Ciampoli and Urban VIII himself (Delbeke 2002). The impetus for Bona to write down his ideas on liturgy, and the liturgical significance of architecture, came from the very milieu that produced the texts discussed in this chapter. To Bona, like Durandus, liturgy is the true nature of religion, for religion—and, thus, the Church—is nothing but the cult of praising God. As a consequence, Bona saw the dedication rite as an integral part of a church building (Bona 1747–53, v.2: ch. 20). Both the rite and the building are visible and complementary manifestations of worship, and bear witness to man's intuitive acknowledgement of a divine creator who establishes and safeguards the harmony of creation (Bona 1663: 49–77).

Appendix: Brandi's description of the *talamo*

Brandi's description is in Brandi 1625: 54–8. Part of the description is transcribed in: Lavin 1973 and Fagiolo dell'Arco 1997: 262–3. This *relatione* is mentioned in Allacci 1633: 35–6.

Prima bisognò pensare à fabricare un nobilissimo Talamo, che fusse come il carro trionfale, in cui doveva portarsi l'imagine della Vergine, & essendo in Roma il Sig. Oratio Torriani, Architetto militare, & civile di S.M. Cattolica, molto principale, adoperato da'Signori Cardinali, & da altri Prencipi, dal Sig. D. Carlo Barberino gli fù commesso il disegno di questo Talamo, qual fece veramente ingegnoso, curioso, & vago. Era il Talamo d'ordine Ionico, alto palmi trentadue, & mezo, & a proportione largo sedici, & haveva ne'quattro angoli quattro basi, ò pedestalli alto palmi sei, & mezo, & di sopra quattro colonne di rilievo ritorte à foggia di quelle del Tempio di Salomone, che hoggi si vedono nella Chiesa del Vaticano, inargentate d'argento fino, alte palme quattordici, e mezo, & grosso uno; e tre quarti, le quali venivano cine a foggia di serpe di pianta, & da rami di rose colorite al naturale con sue frondi, che in quel campo d'argento facevano curiosa vista, & usciva la pianta di quelle rose come dai suoi vasi dalle base delle colonne. Seguiva di sopra il capitello, d'ordine Ionico alto un palmo, & mezo con suoi festoni, & voluti tutto messo a oro, & sopra le quattro colonne recorreva un'architrave d'altezza un palmo, e un quarto, nel quale erano attaccati i pendoni a uso di baldachino dipinti con rose, & api che sono l'impresa dell'Eccellentissima fameglia Barberina, che davano mirabil gratia a tutto il Talamo. Sopra i quattro architravi veniva alzata in luogo di cupula una bellissima corona imperiale fatta alla grande, d'altezza di palmi otto, & mezo, con le sue costole inarcate, che andavano ad unirsi tutti insieme nella sommità. Era contornata tutta la corona di gioie, & di perle grosse un'oncia, e meza l'una, & le gioie erano ovate, tonde, quadre, & a ottangoli, contornate d'oro buono, & colorite di colore di smeraldi, di topazzi, carbonchi, giacinti, & diamanti, coperte di talco per renderle più lustre, che facevano ricca, & superba mostra. Nella corona fra una costola, & l'altra veniva posta con molto magistero una tocca di finissimo argento fatta a gelosia, con rose incarnate, rosse, & bianche di seta, & di cambrai negli scompartimenti, & legature della mandola di detta tocca. Sopra le quattro colonne ne'quattro cantoni erano quattro Angeli di rilievo in piedi alti palmi tre, e mezo l'uno, con le lor'ali, travisati di tocca d'argento turchina, che tenevano da una mano una mappa grande di rose, & fiori alla lor grandezza proportionata, dall'altra rosari, e corone. Nella sommità in mezo a detta corona, & cupola era un'Angelo dell'istessa grandezza in atto di volare con una mano piena di rose, & l'altra di corone, & di rosari, che pareva gli volesse gettare al popolo, & che l'invitasse a pigliarle. [. . .] Resideva con molta maestà in mezo a questa artificiosa machina l'imagine della goloriosa Vergine [. . .] e sopra la figura della Madonna appariva lo Spirito Santo in forma di colomba in mezzo a raggi d'oro, cose che spiravano, e rendevano a tutti i riguardanti devotione grandissima.

Gigli 1994: 146–50 relates the procession, with the description of the *talamo* on 149–50:

Sorgevano da un palco quadro quattro grandissime colonne attorcigliate poste sopra le loro base, et piedestalli, sopra le quali colonne si aggirava in tondo un bellissimo cornicione, sopra il quale a guisa di una stella in arco si formava una cuppola fra i raggi aperta, et sopra la cornice nelle 4. cantonate sopra le colonne erano quattro bellissimi angeli, et tutta questa machina era inargentata, et in alcuni lochi indorata: nel mezzo del palco dentro delle colonne sorgevano alcuni scalini, sopra li quali, come in un bellissimo tabernacolo d'oro era collocata la Imagine della Madonna SS.ma del Rosario, quella istessa, che nella Minerva si riverisce nella sua Cappella, la quale Imagine è devotissima, et fu dipinta già da un frate Santo del medesimo Ordine di S. Domenico, chiamato il B.to Giovanni da Fiesole.

Notes

This chapter expands an argument first proposed in Delbeke 2002: 230–57.

1 Another manuscript account, by Michelangelo Lualdi, is in the Biblioteca Corsiniana (Rome), ms. 273, f. 121r–124v. Urban VIII had Silvester's dedication depicted in a fresco in the Confessio of Saint Peter's, see Gallavotti Cavallero 1999: 58.

2 It should be noted that a temporary precursor of the baldachin was erected for the dedication of the altar by Clement VIII, June 29, 1594, see Kirwin 1981: 148–51; Kirwin's identification of a drawing now in Vienna as a design of this altar has been contested by Lavin 1984.

3 The columns are ready on August 1, 1626; installation starts on September 23 of the same year (Pollak 1931: 338, no. 1109; 344, no. 1127).

4 Gigli 1994, as quoted in Pollak 1931: 99:

> Ma Paolo V. fu quello, che finì di gettare a terra tutto il restante della Chiesa vecchia, et con disegno novo vi aggiunse altre sei Cappelle et finalmente finì la Chiesa affatto con il Portico, et tutto ciò, che vi bisognava. Adunque la Chiesa vecchia, che fu consecrata da San Silvestro, era stata tutta levava (*sic*) via, et la nova essendo finita, non era ancor consecrata. Per questo Papa Urbano, il quale in questi giorni haveva fatto alzare l'Altare di S. Pietro et (con ordegni maravigliosi) sollevatolo così intiero da terra, haveva fatto aggiungere alli scalini vecchi, altri quattro scalini di marmo, et di suo ordine in questo tempo si lavoravano quattro gran colonne di bronzo per adornare il medesimo Altare, et nelli Mesi avanti haveva fatto adornare la Nicchia, dove si conserva il Ssmo Volto di N.S. nel velo di Veronica impresso.

Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. Urb. 1096, 365, as quoted in Pollak 1931: 98:

> Sed nunc id Altare de Smi ordine elevatum fuit ad duorum almorum quam erat, et aditi sunt alij duo gradus, ob opus magnificentissimum ibi collocandum, cum quatu(o)r magnis columnis detorctis ex aere cum Angelis desuper, item ex aere sustentantibus baldachinum supra id Altare ad hornatum Sanctor. Apostolorum Petri et Pauli Sepulchri et cum Dei nec non eorundem Apostolorum auxilio brevi tempore hoc opus ad perfectionem pervenit.

On Guidiccioni's poem, see *infra*. See also Harper 1999: 295, n. 642.

5 The imaginary visual association of the Baldacchino with ceremonies of the years 1625–6 was not limited to the tapestry or the objects depicted at its base. An engraving showing the interior arrangement of St Peter's for Urban's canonization of Elisabeth of Portugal, on May 22, 1625 depicts the Baldacchino as it was conceived in the late 1620s, with an architrave connecting the four columns and the open dome; (Fagiolo dell'Arco 1997: 257). Marc Worsdale has however convincingly argued that this engraving served to test the visual impact of the arrangements planned for the canonization of Andrea Corsini, in 1629 (Gramiccia 1981: nos. 253, 255).

6 See also Severano 1630: 14–15:

> Può ancora quel muro della Porta Santa, significare i veri Fedeli; i quali, come pietre vive sono posti nell'edificio della Città Celeste; che perciò l'istesso Pontefice, quando la mura in fine dell'anno Santo, presupponendo, che li medesimi Fedeli siano all'hora in gratia di Dio, & habbiano ricevuto la remissione delle colpe, e delle pene, mediante l'Indulgenza concessali, dice quell'Inno. *Urbs Hierusalem beata, quaea construitur in coelis vivis ex lapidibus, &c.*

7 Briccio 1625: 25:

> il qual modo di cantare con moltitudine di popolo fù di gran stupore la compagnia del santiss. Rosario nella Chiesa di S. Maria sopra Minerva governata da Padri di S. Dom. del. ord. de Predic. quale andò la Domenica di Settvagesima à di 26. di Gen. di questann. alla 4. Chiese in numero tra donne e huomini di passa 30. mila persone durando circa tre hore à passare, che rese grandissima maraviglia e stupore non essendosi mai più vista ne i tempi nostri, processione più numerosa di questa.

8 See also the dedication of the *relazione* to Carlo Barberini and his wife, Brandi 1625: 2:

> & poichè l'Eccellenze vostre sono al presente l'uno Priore e l'altra Priora dell'Archiconfraternità del Santissimo Rosario, & nell'attione della sodetta Processione si sono mostrate api cosi devote de i fiori, & delle rose di Maria santissima, alla quale hanno voluto per loro devotione fabricare il vago, & artifitioso Alveo di quel Talamo, nel quale la sua sacra Imagine è stata portata in processione, m'è paruto dedicar loro mia picciola fatica, in guisa d'un mazzetto di rose spirituali, raccolte dal mistico giardino della Regina del Paradiso.

9 A description of the 1650 procession in Gigli 1994: 606–7. The anonymous *Relatione* (1650) copies Gigli's description from 1625 *verbatim*. This account is listed, without reference to Gigli, by Diez 1986: no. 44 and Nussdorfer 1998: 458, who quotes Fagiolo dell'Arco 1997: 586.

10 I have used the edition of Guidiccioni 1633 in Newman and Stickney Newman 1992. References to the three sections of the poem will be given as *Dedication*, *Reader* (for the *To the Reader*), and *Ara* (for the *Ara Maxima Vaticana*), with the verse number.

11 Florence Wuidar kindly pointed out to me that the frontispieces of several earlier editions of ecclesiastical music produced at the papal court also depicted the solomonic columns, as for instance Francesco Soriano's *Missarum liber* of 1609.

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Abbreviations

n. note
f. figure

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7

The speculative challenges of festival architecture in eighteenth-century France

Eric Monin

Translated by Nick Hargreaves and Christine Macy

Even today, the feasting and splendor of public festivals in eighteenth-century France evoke an image of a frivolous and lavish monarchy. The excess of these events, however, should not disguise the political aims behind them, which required them to be magnificent in direct proportion to their diplomatic importance. City-sponsored public festivals were meticulously documented in sumptuous anthologies offered as diplomatic gifts. Representations of the events were embellished by narratives laden with superlatives, accompanied by descriptions of crowds tirelessly celebrating the glory of a sovereign who was always the centre of the celebration (Monin 2005a). The cries, the colors, the music, the distribution of wine and foodstuffs, the luxury and abundance expressed in all the festival arts were generously illustrated and carefully planned with the dignity and respect appropriate to an orderly and hierarchical society.

Yet the potential for disorder or subversive behavior that was always present at public festivals required that the crowds be contained, the entertainments controlled, and the installation of temporary structures in the city closely supervised. For behind the panache of these large spectacles lay a precise, faultless organization. The power of these ephemeral events—linked to the artistic virtuosity of their creators—would have come to nothing without the rigor of a complex and well-considered system of event production. The temporary transformation of the city and the new uses to which it was put, the production of a completely reorganized environment filled with sensory stimulation, and the introduction of festive time disconnected from the rhythms of everyday life, all required mastery of event planning. No festival is improvised. Even a festival called on short notice required time for planning and preparation.

Spatial control

Eighteenth-century public festivals in France, as in other European cities, continued a tradition that had already been brilliantly elaborated in the Renaissance and the seventeenth century (Jacquot 1964 and Lecoq 1982). By the dawn of the eighteenth century, however, these projects assumed a new dimension in the context of an emerging policy for urban beautification, which was to lay the foundations for the reorganization of urban space in the Age of Enlightenment. Rapidly growing cities suffered from streets congested with traffic and the piecemeal development of water, sewage and other functions needed for their ever-growing populations (Barles 1999). Incapable of integrating these new structural requirements, large cities became synonymous with discomfort and dissatisfaction (Etlin 1977). At the same time, cities were regularly decried for the poor quality of their public buildings that did not reflect the artistic ambitions of their rulers. This misfit between rapidly growing cities and the aesthetic aspirations of their ruling elites governed the considerable transformations that were to mark the history of Western cities. Streets were widened, squares created, openings cleared to connect crucial points, and water and sewage systems organized (Guillerme 1990). Fountains flourished (Massounie 1995), quays were built to simplify the unloading of ships, and nuisances identified and banished from the cities (Patte 1769), while principles of decency and accommodation (*bienséance* and *convenance*) guided the artistic production of architects responsible for the construction of new public buildings (Szambien 1986). Nourished by much theorizing (Fichet 1979), this policy of urban beautification was put into practice with the introduction of a rigorous regulatory framework that aimed to correct the long-term development of the city, aided by the grand projects and major public works of the central government (Harouel 1993).

In this rethinking of the city—which made it a subject for reflection and an arena for action—one must consider public festival projects among the body of urban experimentation that accompanied the Age of Enlightenment. The issue of transforming the city occupied a central position in all these projects, and included efforts to reorganize urban functions and to introduce new urban landscapes reflecting the latest fashion (Monin 2005b). These considerations affected the work of those organizing the festivals. Although the choice of a festival site may have depended on a long-established practice, each project required specialized planning considerations—the aim being to provide a large public with the possibility of enjoying, under good conditions, a festival dedicated to a king or a prince who would actually be at the event. The size of the site, its accessibility and layout had to be designed to accommodate large crowds and avoid congestion resulting from the temporary constructions built for the occasion, and sufficient openings had to be provided for crowds to circulate safely through the site.

The weight of tradition occasionally countered this logic; for example, municipal squares of cities with growing populations were often too small to handle the expected crowds. To compensate, festival organizers turned to natural amphitheaters formed by the rivers crossing through the main cities of the realm: in Paris, Lyon, Nantes, Lille, Strasbourg and Grenoble, the Seine, Saône, Loire, Deûle, Ille and Isère rivers became the stage settings for festivals. Public grandstands and viewing platforms were built on the riverbanks, and crowds massed on quays, at windows and on rooftops. Prized by festival designers, riverbank sites made the assembly of large crowds possible, as evidenced by the head counts published on completion of these events. The compendium published for the festivals held in Paris for the marriage of Louis XV's eldest daughter Marie-Louise-Elisabeth (known as Madame Première) to the Infante Don Felipe of Spain, stated that 500,000 people lined the Seine River to see the festivities (although one must be cautious when using these figures, since an estimate of 1745 cites 600,000 people in attendance) (GDA, C 3638). For the 1782 celebration of the birth of the Dauphin, Pierre-Louis Moreau estimated that his placement of the fireworks machine on the bank of the Seine River allowed a third of the city's population, or 280,580 persons, to view the display (NA, K 1017: 273). As an inspiration for this festival, he recalled his earlier proposal for the banks of the Seine, establishing a direct link between permanent and ephemeral transformations (Moreau 1769). The Place de Grève was completely redesigned in its form and decoration. Reorganized to lie perpendicular to the Seine, it was closed off to the north by a monumental gallery providing a wing to the main façade of the Hôtel de Ville. Organized after the raising of the Place des Canons and the extension of Quai Pelletier, this festival provided an opportunity to temporarily realize a beautification project that had never been carried out.

At that time, the Place de Grève was still the showplace for the expression of municipal power, with the Lord Provost and city council members offering, for example, prestigious guests the keys to the city (Le Moël 1984). This obligatory visit was accompanied by a more or less complicated staging that might culminate in fireworks viewed by the honored guest from the balcony of the building. To celebrate a military victory, the signature of a peace treaty, or the birth of a prince, the Hôtel de Ville and houses of council members were decorated and illuminated and the Place de Grève was carefully prepared for the ceremony. The construction of a fireworks machine along the axis of the city hall, flanked by colonnades that formed wings to the building, and the installation of illuminated yew trees and tapered pedestals to light the square, all contributed to rectifying the irregularities of the site. In any case, regularity, layout and harmony were the key words governing the installation of these ephemeral projects.

Lights arranged in lines appeared to straighten out winding streets and introduced regular patterns on the street level of houses lacking order and harmony. In November of 1744, the city of Paris celebrated the return of Louis XV from a military campaign by lining the Marché Saint-Paul with chandeliers of Suresnes lamps supported on posts laid out "at a suitable distance so that the rue St-Antoine could be extended the same width (across the market square)" (NA, H2 1861). Below Place de Grève in Place des Canons (a location traditionally reserved for working-class festivities), a "hall of light" was created by garlands of lamps and steel wire chandeliers suspended from the posts outlining the area of festivities.

The main purpose of such posts, barriers, frameworks and lights was to organize the festival space. The intention was to set limits, draw contours and precisely outline the site where the festival was to take place. But it was first necessary to identify an "attractive site" (Blondel 1771: II, VII 282)—that is, a place known for its formal and aesthetic qualities—before setting up the festival. In 1782, for his project constructed on Place de Grève, Moreau had no hesitation in "enlarging the site to receive and place their Majesties and the Court as suitably as possible."(*Gazette* 1782: 46) Festival designers were only able to engage the city by exerting considerable efforts in their designs to overcome the constraints of urban space. One solution that promised to overcome all these difficulties presented itself on the occasion of the competition organized for the new Place Louis XV (Garms 2003). A large number of the entries proposed schemes adapted to large festivals: Beausire l'Aîné proposed creating a large square opening onto the Seine River adjacent to the Hôtel de Ville that would be able to hold a considerable number of people; Cardon imagined a bridge linking the Ile de la Cité, Ile Saint-Louis and Place de Grève able to contain "a vast crowd that would be placed comfortably and without danger" (Granet 1962: 51); Contant proposed rebuilding the Hôtel de Ville on Quai Malaquai, fronting a square that "would be very useful for holding public festivals" (Granet 1962: 199); and finally, Servandoni, using antiquity as his source, proposed an amphitheatre outside the city able to hold "a prodigious number of spectators" (Patte 1765: 211).

When it was finally built at the western end of the Jardin des Tuileries, Place Louis XV seemed to offer the appropriate solution. Yet as fate would have it, during the fireworks display held for the birth of the Dauphin in 1770, a terrible accident caused by a panic in the crowd led to the death of several hundred Parisians. This disaster led to a complete rejection of the site for public festivity; none of the site's other qualities could compensate for the public's fear of its surrounding moats. The festival tradition returned to the center of the city, at the Place de Grève. Yet this attempt proved that durable structures and ephemeral projects could coexist, and anticipated the development of public infrastructures (Chaudoir and Ostrowetski 1996: 80). However, such coordinated planning was not the norm. More commonly, festival organizers struggled to overcome the city's many imperfections. Backed by an array of municipal decrees aimed at controlling dangerous practices and behaviors, festival organizers were engaged in a risky undertaking with an uncertain outcome, as they set in motion measures that disturbed the usual patterns of city life and aimed to transform the city's image.

An appraisal of the festival site was the first step towards resolving its logistical problems. To orchestrate the safe movement of crowds converging towards the festival site, traffic management plans were drawn up to chart the flows of goods and people. Instructions were circulated prior to the event in the form of municipal decrees enacted specifically for the occasion. Occasionally, festival organizers mandated separate circulation routes for coaches and pedestrians. For the 1784 launching of the Flesselle aerostat in Lyon for example, the city architect Jean-Antoine Morand dictated parking along the route for coaches traveling from the city center to the festival site. On their return, vehicles had to continue their route across country before circling back to the city. Similarly, in 1770 the engineer Perronet took exceptional measures to control the flow of people attending the festival for the striking down of the new Neuilly bridge, keeping them away from the parking area reserved for royal and palace coaches, and controlling all the traffic in an enlarged perimeter around the festival site (Figure 7.1):

> we imposed such a strict organization from the outskirts of Paris and on the roads around Neuilly over a distance of two leagues, that one could arrive without confusion and leave in the same manner and this meant that there were no accidents: this was much more difficult closer to Paris given the considerable number of coaches and crowds drawn by the presence of the King, the wooden bridge used by everyone to pass onto the other side was narrow and the place where this event was to take place very enclosed. (Perronet 1783: 98)

Wooden barricades were positioned around festival sites to channel the movements of the crowd, reduce accidents, and prevent people from falling into the river and drowning. For example, the estimates for the list of carpentry work to be erected in Paris in 1749 to celebrate the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle included several items concerning the construction of "barriers necessary for the safety of the public on the day of the festivities" (NA, K 1009: 2122).

Employing both appeals and prohibitions, a regulatory framework aimed to control all parameters that might hinder the smooth running of the event. The law accompanied and controlled the actions of the festival organizers, prepared the groundwork for the festival and preserved the city and its inhabitants from risks associated with the event. The use of space was also subject to specific rules. Inhabitants did not have the right to erect scaffolding or stands that might obstruct the space occupied by the festival. To reduce fire risks, it was forbidden to throw firecrackers or launch rockets and should these rules be infringed, those responsible were subject to heavy fines or punishments: "Fathers and mothers are responsible for their children, school headmasters for their students, masters for their servants" (Lecler du Brillet 1738: t. VI, 149).

The issue of public order, however, went further than restrictions on public behavior, it also affected the organization of the festival sites. The entries of kings, princes and ambassadors into cities provide the best illustration of this. The care invested in the composition of these processions and the richness of their retinue testified to the centrality of these events in the political life of the realm, and their pomp and circumstance figuratively represented royal power

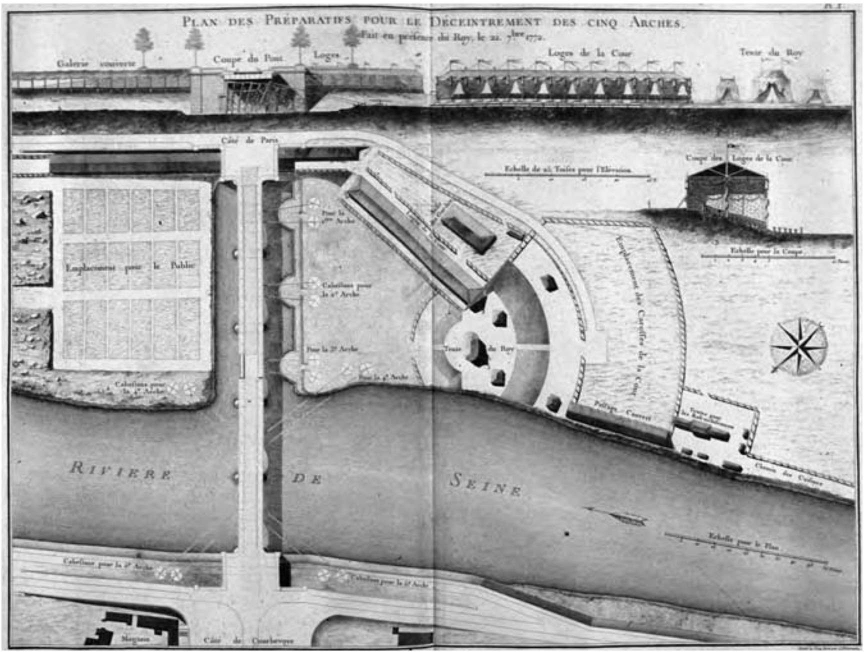

Figure 7.1 This plan presents the festival setting designed by the engineer Perronet for the ceremonial completion of the Neuilly bridge. The event centered around the final removal of the wooden scaffolding under the masonry arches. The king's tent and viewing loges for the court are upstream (to the right of the image), backed by parking for the coaches, while the public viewing area is downstream (to the left). Taken from Perronet, J.-R. (1783) *Description des projets et de la construction des ponts de Neuilli, de Mantes, d'Orléans, de Louis XVI, etc.*, Paris, plate X. Author's collection.

to the public. The routes taken by these formal entries needed to be wide enough for state coaches drawn by six or eight horses, while still accommodating considerable crowds. As a result, processional routes used the widest and straightest roads (Monin 2006). Generated by the rhythm of events inherent in the kingdom, festivals drew out an urban geography that was dictated by the demands of political events. In that regard, public festivals pushed ideas about the city forward into the reality of the Age of Enlightenment with more acuity than any urban embellishment project.

Lastly, organizers had to consider the pleasure of the spectators. Good visibility was essential to fully appreciate the fireworks and festival illuminations. Organizers had to keep this in mind as they laid out the site and designed its embellishments. Squares were transformed into theaters surrounding fireworks machines or in front of illuminated façades. In Nantes, the façade of the new commodities exchange was regularly used as a lit backdrop for the public festivals taking place in the square facing the building. The wings of the Place de la

Bourse were decorated by pilasters crowned with a continuous cornice "connected to one another by a balustrade and a string of lanterns" attached to the trunks of two rows of elms leading up to the building (LADA, C 700: 24). Using the urban structure of this site, this illumination accentuated the geometry of the square and overlaid it with an avenue, temporarily modifying the city.

Many ephemeral projects used similar devices to transform urban spaces for festivals. When Madame de France visited Lyon in 1749, Place Louis-le-Grand became the stage for illuminations intended to draw attention to the statue of Louis XIV by underlining the balustrades and accompanying the fountains livening up the square (LMA, AA 145: 49). In 1759, Jean-Antoine Morand, the city architect, proposed increasing the size of the setting by building four porticos along the outer edge of the square. Designed for the king's entry into the city, this project, which was never built, was intended to produce, "seen from a certain distance [. . .] the same effect as the Trianon in Versailles" (LMA, AA 144: 44). In the center of the square, around the statue of Louis-le-Grand, Morand completed his composition by "using a circular plan, the same arcades crowned by a balustrade similar to the square's boundary" (LMA, AA 144: 44). In a similar manner in Paris, Rue de la Ferronnerie was frequently transformed into a "vast gallery" embellished by two rows of porticos positioned in front of the houses, forming a straight aisle leading to a monumental decoration built against the houses on Rue Saint-Denis (Ruggieri 1802: 270) (Figure 7.2).

These examples show that the framed gallery was the *leitmotiv* for many festival designs, one that allowed festival organizers to correct imperfections of the ground floor. This device was a remedy for the "state of negligence, confusion and disorder" of cities, so lamented by Abbot Laugier (Laugier 1753: 209). To address these problems and to compensate for gaps in the decoration of buildings, Laugier had proposed substituting "the horrible hovels that clutter, narrow and disfigure most bridges [. . .] by large and attractive column-supported porticos located at both sides" (Laugier 1753: 230). We are thus brought right to the heart of the problem represented by urban beautification: the definition proposed by the *Encyclopaedia* suggests to what degree festival projects might participate in this logic of transformation—"beautifying means artistically adding to objects that might be uninteresting in themselves, forms or accessories to render them interesting, agreeable, precious, etc." Having identified the weaknesses and irregularities of urban festival sites, their organizers took measures to correct faults by adding elements to reconfigure urban squares into new spatial and aesthetic orders. Such rectifications, straightening of irregularities and concealment of chaotic buildings allowed organizers to present exemplary urban arrangements. In this way, festivals played as important a role in the reform of urban space as did more durable beautification projects during the Age of Enlightenment.

Nonetheless, numerous critics virulently attacked public festivals as wasteful and pointless extravagances. Voltaire regretted that the sums swallowed up by festivals were not reserved for urban beautification, contrasting the comfort

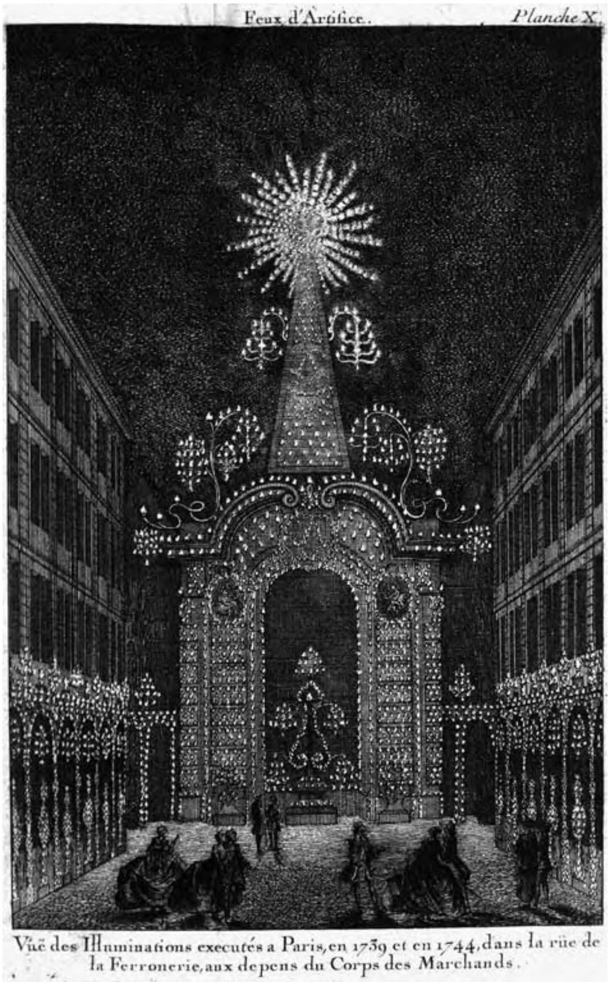

Figure 7.2
Lighting program installed in the Rue de la Ferronnerie in Paris for the celebration of the marriage of Madame Première in 1739, reused in 1744 to celebrate the return of Louis XV to the city. Both projects were sponsored by the merchants' society. From Frézier, A.-F. (1747) *Traité des feux d'artifice pour le spectacle*, Paris, plate X. Author's collection.

and magnificence of the city with the organization of "small fireworks displays taking place opposite a shoddy building on a little square used for the execution of criminals" (Voltaire 1750: 78)—a criticism that was echoed two decades later by Louis-Sébastien Mercier (Mercier 1776: t.I, 47–8). But it would be unjust to consider these ephemeral projects as mere substitutes for permanent beautification projects, disconnected from the urban problems of the period. Although they were only temporary installations, it was precisely their capacity to act directly and immediately on the form of the city that won over the officials from the provinces who were often responsible for approving these works. Such festivals expressed the power of the central government in public spaces more rapidly than, for example, the commissioning of monumental statues in city squares.

Controlling effects

Controlling space went hand in hand with controlling the new points of view provided to the public. In his *Cours d'architecture*, Jacques-François Blondel insisted on the need to define an appropriate distance to appreciate the illuminations "especially [when they] are to be found at the end of a large road, an attractive allée, a canal, etc." (Blondel 1771: II, VII 277). This concept of "standing back" (*point de distance*) contributed to the notion of the "viewpoint" which, at that time, held an important place in the development of the idea of urban beautification. In the *Encyclopaedia* (relying in part on definition given in the Daviler dictionary), the viewpoint is "the spot where one stops at a given distance to fully enjoy the most advantageous aspect of a building." The siting of ephemeral projects was clearly dictated by this visibility criterion when they were placed at the ends of streets, aligned with traffic routes, in the center of squares and extending their openings, erected on bridges, positioned at high points of the city or anchored in the middle of rivers.

In Paris, the aesthetic and visual qualities of the Seine River between the Pont-Neuf and the royal bridge were regularly incorporated into festivals. This is how architect Jean-Nicolas Servandoni justified choosing this site for the marriage between Madame Première and the Infante Don Felipe of Spain, in 1739.

> This vast canal is bordered by spacious quaysides and superb buildings that, when taken together are able to hold, much like the tiers of an amphitheatre, a vast number of people. There has never been a better location for a great festival and none that could have a better effect.
>
> (*Description* 1740: 2)

Ending with a view of the Pont Neuf, the backdrop to this perspective represented an ideal stage setting for Servandoni to construct a monumental fireworks machine in front of the equestrian statue of Henri IV.

The siting of ephemeral constructions along processional routes had to be calculated according to points of view. A memorandum written in anticipation of the visit to Bordeaux by the Infanta Marie-Thérèse in 1745 and attributed to Servandoni, clearly develops the principles underlying the location of these projects:

> As a general rule, important monuments are planned for a city in such a way as to give their best effect when seen in perspective [. . .], therefore there is no doubt that any badly placed edifice will lose a large amount of the reputation it deserves. As a result, its author will gain far less renown because, although ordinarily it will be said to be attractive, it will not have been seen from the artist's point of view [. . .]; in other words, everything that is decoration, even decoration that will only exist for a few days, should be visible to the public without fearing they will die in the effort.
>
> (GDA, C 3638)

Servandoni's design for this event scrupulously integrated these principles. One of the various constructions distributed along the Infanta's processional route was a square-shaped triumphal arch in the city's moat, "pierced in all directions by four arcades [. . .] through which one discovers the tree-lined streets and buildings forming the most attractive district in the city" (GDA, C3638). Simultaneously a beautifying object and a machine used to frame and stage the city of Bordeaux, this construction illustrated the architect's inventiveness and foresight. The design was deliberate and controlled. While the triumphal arch bearing the decorations complies with the rules of good architecture, Servandoni uses the unique form of the arch to create tableaus that bring together disparate perspective views, thereby turning this construction into a pivotal point, a center of urban composition that entirely renews the meaning of the urban landscape.

The anonymous author of a project proposed in 1770—which unfortunately was never carried out—for the marriage between the Dauphin and Marie-Antoinette on Place Louis XV also proposed establishing a large number of visual relationships between the royal square and the neighboring districts, as if the site of the festival had become the point of departure for a visual conquest of the surrounding landscape. The festival spilled out from Place Louis XV and crossed the Seine to the opposite bank to involve other districts (*Projets* 1770: 26). But the project went much further: proposing to visually link the two river banks by constructing mirrored illuminations that would underline the north-south axis across the ensemble:

> The illuminations of these two facades could be linked [the author was discussing the two colonnades on Place Louis XV] by providing a point of view at a sufficient distance that would look down the royal street separating these two buildings [. . .]. This would be answered by an identical device on the other side of the river which would be mirrored by its counterpart on Rue de Bourgogne, assuming that these two streets run in a straight line, something that we doubt. The illumination of Rue Royale would represent a mock-up of the portal to the future Madeleine church; opposite, on Rue de Bourgogne, there would be a matching portal.
>
> (*Projets* 1770: 42–3)

The spatial investment was based on a visual and landscape composition. Thanks to Place Louis XV and the terraces of the Tuileries, the view projects the city, a capital freed from its physical limits, towards the west and the countryside beyond. The third day of the festival described by this narration proposes an illumination which "would be continued [. . .] beyond the top of the mountain, and the gates of the Barrière de Chaillot. A superb decoration in the form of a triumphal arch would be erected at the top of this mountain" (*Projets* 1770: 26). These latter proposals prove that festivals were also able to anticipate the city's development by becoming the tool of a spectacular simulation.

Controlling the viewpoints of an ephemeral layout meant controlling the visual effects that transported the public into the festival's phantasmagorical universe. This postulate was essential as it allowed the planned effects to be precisely designed and made best use of the money spent. In other words, work was concentrated on the visible parts of the project. It was this principle that anchored public festivals to the world of performing arts. In most cases, timber scaffoldings held in place painted canvas stretched on frames (Monin 2003). The aim was to produce the illusion of a sumptuous architecture which would magically replace day-to-day urban settings. Pushed by time, limited by the means invested, festival organizers found their inspiration in the universe of theater decor, both in terms of installation techniques and expected effects (Rabreau 1978). In his search for rules able to define an architecture that would stimulate the senses, Le Camus de Mézières understood the need to borrow the concept of effect from the theatrical world (Le Camus de Mézières 1780: 5–6). The best theater sets did not merely depict where the action was taking place, but communicated all the sensations appropriate to the setting. Highly impressed by the dioramas invented by Jean-Nicolas Servandoni (Servandoni 1739), Le Camus de Mézières explained how the architect:

> knew how, in a silent spectacle, to make the public feel the effect of the sun's burning light. [. . .] there were almost no shadows, the sky glowed red, the land arid, a lighting effect that seemed to set the air afire; all these elements produced an illusion from which none of the spectators could escape; there was almost a feeling of suffering, we were subjugated by the power of art.
>
> (Le Camus de Mézières 1780: 6)

Illusion drove this art, and the skills of all the artists involved gave form to the phantasmagorical universe of the great baroque festivals. As in the theater, *trompe-l'oeil* painting played an essential role in creating the illusion (Zorzi 1977). Specifications and estimates detailed how color should be used to emphasize areas in relief and how the imitation of noble materials could trick viewers into believing the effects. In Bordeaux, the triumphal arch constructed in relief and erected by Servandoni was "so well built and so perfectly imitated stone that, without touching it, one could be completely fooled by its appearance" (GDA, C3638). For these public festivals, bronze, gold, Genoa marble, white marble, violet marble, green marble, alabaster, agate, emerald and lapis-lazuli invaded the cities of the kingdom . . . thanks to paint. For the most important projects, constructions were erected in relief, with stretched canvases used for the flat surfaces and columns, pilasters and pediments protruding into the foreground along with plaster or cardboard statues that gave volume to the setting. In this specific case, Servandoni preferred the restraint of forms to the fantasy of color. In Bordeaux in 1745, as in Paris in 1739, he specified that "a uniform stone color be used to cover all materials that had been employed in the construction of the edifice" (*Description* 1740; GDA, C 3638). Frequently employed for the decoration of orchestra rostrums and wine fountains, this solution emphasized the monolithic nature of the works. Occasionally, a combination of these two systems was used to reflect a hierarchy between the visible and hidden faces of the construction, as in the decoration for the temporary Temple of Hymen planned in 1747 for the western tip of the Ile de la Cité in Paris on the occasion of the Dauphin's second marriage. Richly colored architectural reliefs were to face the Seine River where the performance was to take place while, to the rear, "the face overlooking the road was to be given a treatment of rusticated stone painted on canvas" (NA, H2 1861).

Imitation marble or stone were not only used to simulate richness and luxury. They were also used to introduce an idea of stability and longevity corresponding to the aesthetic principles of the age (Plate 7a). At that time, duration was essential if buildings were to bear witness to the grandeur of a sovereign's reign, and constructions able to face the future without weathering acquired the status of monument (Wittman 1997). In *Monuments érigés en France à la gloire de Louis XV*, Pierre Patte, discussing the construction of the Sainte-Geneviève church, reaffirmed the durable nature of the building which, from the moment it was designed, incorporated an important commemorative value, "The precautions we take in everything we do to ensure the perfect completion of this latter monument should render it eternal" (Patte 1765: 7).

What legitimacy could be accorded to public festivals within this context? How could a festival emerge unscathed from a debate that ceaselessly underlined the imbalance between what was durable and what was ephemeral, a debate which contrasted the wisdom of well-considered investments to the extravagance of public festivals? The solution lay in the ever-greater effects offered to citizens. Festivals created their own monumentality out of surprise, extraordinary beauty, dazzling effects, resounding thunder and lightning; they were designed to impress and leave an indelible memory. The simulation of noble materials even depicted the wear of time: in Rome in 1729, the edifices erected on Piazza Navona for the birth of the Dauphin were richly decorated with *trompe-l'oeil* "in imitation aged and worn marble to give an impression of antiquity" (Daudet 1731: 299). But of what use was an imitation marble that revealed the wear of time without the figurative representation of an architecture that strictly obeyed "the rigorous rules imposed by past masters" (GDA, C3638)? Volutes, fully arched arcades with their archivolts, freestanding columns crowned with pediments, pilasters with their bases, capitals, triglyphs, metopes and mutules, entablatures incorporating architraves, friezes and cornices ornamented with modillions and rosettes, cradled arcades forming a barrel vault enriched with regularly placed alcoves, acroteria crowned by balustrades and vases were imitated using wooden planks, cardboard, plaster and daub.

These figurative representations conveyed the image of a learned architecture, and more licentious productions were in any case severely criticized by specialists who rejected fanciful experiments (Blondel 1771: II, VII 276). But, over and above these rules, festivals were settings for imitated finishes. In most accounts, such artifice was not discussed. To be sure, there were exceptions, such as a description of the Temple of Peace constructed in Lille in 1749 in which the author, either through clumsiness or excessive zeal, explains that the "columns, pilasters and entablature frieze are in imitation agate," the plinth in "imitation rustic stone" and the crown elements in "different types of imitation white marble" (*Description* 1749; LML, 24642) (Plate 7b). In the *Encyclopaedia*, a paragraph in the *architecture* article is devoted to the concept of imitation architecture—*architecture feinte*—with this concept serving to represent:

> all plans, projections and reliefs of a real architecture simply through the use of color, such as can be seen on several façades in Italy and on the twelve pavilions of the Château de Marly; or for the decorations of theatres and triumphal arches painted on canvas or wood, either as flat projections or perspectives for royal entries, public festivals, funeral processions, fireworks displays, etc.
>
> (*Encyclopédie* 1751: I, 618)

Like Michel de Pure, should one deduce that festivals "tricked and insulted" the public through the use of artifice comparable to "a house of cards, constructions made from paper"? (Pure 1668: 207) If there was deception, could it not be said that it was based on a tacit agreement between the public and the festival organizers? Was this *architecture feinte* capable of challenging the credibility of the spectators without disappointing them? How otherwise is it possible to explain the infatuation of citizens for these events, without taking into consideration the mixture of kindness and indulgence that seemingly motivated the public? (Monin 2005a)

The role played by festival audiences should not be underestimated. Both festival designers and the public expected a great deal from these ephemeral projects. Undoubtedly, the festive atmosphere and the distribution of wine and food stimulated a crowd's exuberance and considerably increased its capacity to be impressed, as imperfections were erased by drunkenness and people's senses aroused by a vast array of lights, sounds and smells. Intoxicated by such richness, the public willingly succumbed to the entertainment and gave free rein to its imagination. This was the moment when one could invert the order of things to create a sense of wonderment. As early as the seventeenth century, Father Ménestrier explained the success of public festivals as being the result of a pact controlling the diversity of energies brought together by the festivities. He evoked an expression of a joy that was "magnificent in its profusion," "ingenious," but "never disturbing" (Ménestrier 1660: 4). For him, it was decorum, or *bienséance*

> that presided over all public ceremonies, that made them magnificent, that controlled their conduct; and that their success was owed to the majesty accompanying this pomp. They made use of various devices to insinuate

> themselves into the spirits of the spectators, often inversing the order of nature by making birds swim, fish fly and mountains and rocks dance
>
> (Ménestrier 1660: 5)

The scene of action spread far beyond the limits of specific architectural representations. All means were used to astound the public and encourage a sense of wonderment. The forces of nature were regularly called on to inspire enchantment or cause fright. The order of the seasons was inverted, mountains rose dramatically from city centers, and extraordinary creatures swam through the rivers while festival organizers prepared the confrontation of elements.

Above all, it was the presence of fire in the city that shattered all references of the citizens (Plate 7b). Taking place at nightfall, festivals became renowned for the sparkle of their lights and illuminations accompanying the simulated architectures. Countless chandeliers, illuminated trees, candelabras, torches, candles, Suresnes lamps, fire pots and lanterns were arranged on the approaches of the festival sites, to light the festivities or create architectural effects, giving birth to extraordinary and spectacular nighttime environments. Because there was little or no ordinary street lighting, the brilliance of these illuminations was all the more impressive. This is evident from the many accounts of these festivals that dwelt on the illuminations, often drawing disproportionate comparisons—for example, when myriad lights laid out around festival areas were seen to transform dark winter nights into "beautiful days" (Monin 2005a; NA, K 1017). For the Dauphin's first marriage in 1745:

> all the bourgeoisie and inhabitants of the city competed with one another in showing their joy, by placing splendid illuminations in front of their houses—one could have thought it a beautiful summer day, but never the night.
>
> (NA, H2 1861)

Associated with this profusion, paintings on sheer fabrics were stretched across windows and lit from within, illustrating the subject of the festival. Taken to an extreme, this technique allowed the creation of luminous architectures that shone at night like magic lanterns. In 1739, the temple of music designed by Servandoni and anchored in the middle of the Seine produced a surprising effect highly appreciated by Parisians:

> It was entirely made from transparent fabric and lit from the inside by an infinite number of lights that had been artfully hidden and distributed. It produced a soft glow that was easy on the eye, fully revealing the contours and colors of the painting without being dazzled.
>
> (*Description* 1740: 5–6)

Finally, fireworks played an essential part in the organization of public festivals. For Frézier, fireworks and ephemeral architecture were intertwined, "these two elements are interrelated, with the structures being designed for the fireworks and, reciprocally, the fireworks for the structures" (Frézier 1747: 449) (Figure 7.3). Dominated by the Italians, this art form presented displays that were the apotheosis of these large festivals. Frézier underscored the power of fire when he wrote, "it is one of those creatures on earth that has everything needed to move us through its light and its vivacity"(Frézier 1747: XI). During the seventeenth century, André Félibien des Avaux had already underlined how the festivals at Versailles offered a wonderful display in which fire, air and water were combined to become a new and extraordinary element "formed from a thousand sparks of fire that, like a thick dust or rather like an infinity of gold atoms, shone with the most glorious light" (Félibien des Avaux 1676). The fireworks showered from on high, catapulted through the air, floated on the water in dragons that spat a thousand flames before exploding, or plunged into

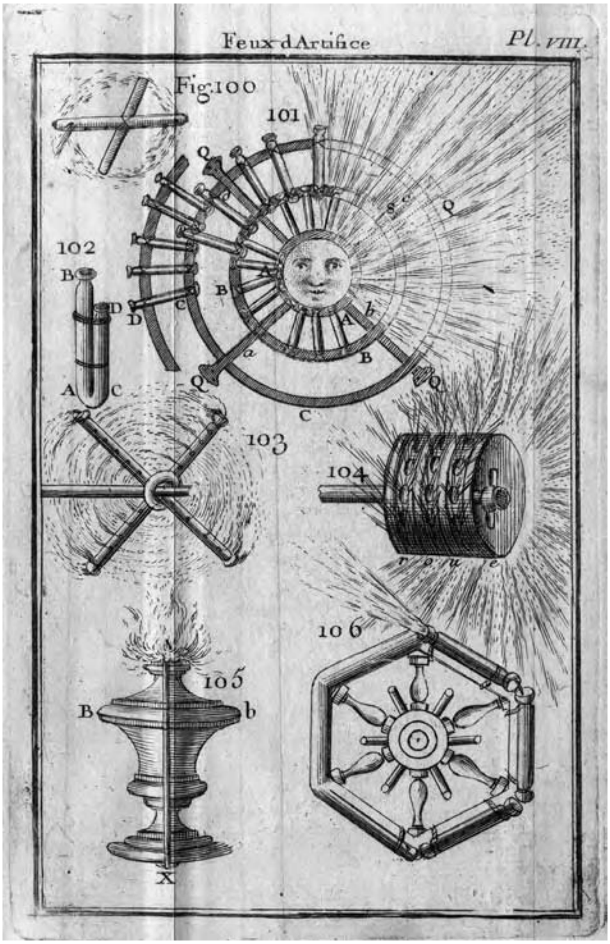

Figure 7.3
Fire whirlwind (100), fixed sun (101), fuse (102), spinning sun (103), alternative form of fixed sun (104), decorative rocket filled with firecrackers (105), and spinning fire wheel (106). From Frézier, A.-F. (1747) *Traité des feux d'artifice pour le spectacle*, Paris, plate VIII. Author's collection.

the river before emerging as a twinkling outline. During the Revolution, Claude Ruggieri even tried to let off fireworks from hydrogen-filled aerostatic balloons! With their capacity to create explosive light, sound and olfactory effects, fireworks overwhelmed the city with their apparent violence and awesome power—although this too, was understood to be illusion, since pyrotechnicians were expected to control their displays to avoid accidents. Yet fireworks could be capricious and temperamental, particularly in bad weather. It was rare for an event to enjoy a "beautiful location, transparent waters and a temperate sky"; this would offer optimal conditions for a project (Blondel 1771: II, VII 282). In bad weather, it was sometimes wiser and simpler to abandon the festival and postpone it to the "first day of good weather" (LADA, C700: 37).

Music was another effect employed to create the fantasy world of public festivals. Considerable efforts were made to create sound landscapes at the scale of the street, the district or, occasionally, the entire city. Dozens of orchestras accompanied these illuminations, wine fountains and the temporary halls erected in the city, producing an extraordinary multi-level musical lattice. The festivals organized to celebrate the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle in 1749 or the Dauphin's wedding in 1782 distributed twenty-five orchestras across the city, while the public festivities of 1752—held for the Dauphin's convalescence—were accompanied by twenty orchestras comprising over two hundred musicians.

Occasionally, music accompanied the flow of processions, thereby contributing to inscribe a new geography of dynamic sounds. The choice of instruments, but also the number of musicians in the orchestras, reveals the priorities for this musical engagement of the city. Generally grouping together a dozen musicians, these orchestras were located on the main public squares, in the middle of major intersections and next to the wine fountains. The orchestras placed in temporary halls erected for the Dauphin's marriage in 1745 each had twenty-five musicians, while the 1739 celebration of the nuptial of Madame Première placed a symphonic orchestra of 180 musicians on the tiers of a floating music room in the middle of the Seine, conducted by François Francoeur and Jean-Ferry Rebel (*Description* 1740: 5). With their violins, cellos, basses, fifes, trumpets, musettes, drums, kettledrums, hunting horns and oboes, the intonations of the bands gave a powerful rhythm to the night.

Orchestral stages were timber structures supporting benches for the musicians, painted canvases depicting the festival themes and a richly decorated backdrop at the rear (Figure 7.4). These basic but solid constructions allowed the musicians to be seated at levels appropriate to their instruments, with the violins, cellos and wind instruments positioned lower down and the kettledrums to the sides. Raised on scaffolding, not only was the orchestra more visible, but it could be heard from a greater distance. And of course, audibility governed the placement of these orchestras as much as did public circulation and the requirements of dancing. As there were no technical means to evaluate the acoustic impact of these choices, effective orchestra location relied on precedent or the advantageous use of sites with obvious acoustic qualities (Monin 1999). Rivers were particularly appreciated as sites, since they multiplied lighting

Figure 7.4 Sectional drawing showing the structure of a tiered orchestra stand installed in the courtyard of the Hôtel de Ville in Paris on the occasion of the marriage of Madame Première in 1739. Detail, taken from *Description des fêtes données par la Ville de Paris à l occasion du mariage de Madame Louise-Isabelle de France et de Dom Philippe, Infant & Grand Amiral d Espagne, les 29 et 30 août 1739.* (1740) Paris: Mercier. Musée départemental Dobrée, Nantes, Inv. Imprimé 1372. Cliché Ch. Hémon - Musée départemental Dobrée, Conseil général de Loire-Atlantique-Nantes.

effects across the surface of the water and amplified sounds as well. In Paris in 1722 and 1739, in Nantes in 1722, and in Lyon in 1759, orchestras were set up on the Seine, Loire and Saône Rivers to heighten the pleasure of citizens thronging the quaysides.

Wherever it took place, music transformed the day-to-day life of the public. It helped citizens to immerse themselves body and spirit into the event—even weighed down by feasting, spectators could not but be affected by orchestral music in city streets. Dancing made people feel lighter, their pains forgotten as the music took hold. We need only read the incredible description of the festivals organized in Nantes in 1729 for the birth of the Dauphin, where "nothing was more curious and surprising than a dance that had been secretly prepared by negroes and negresses with instruments from their country, expressing their dances with all the subtlety and bizarre appropriateness of their nation" (NMA, AA 59: 12–64). And people, like the music itself, were orchestrated. Their movements were planned as spectators were protected, sheltered and, depending on their status, more or less comfortably installed. In 1739 and 1745, the courtyard of the Hôtel de Ville in Paris was entirely covered by a giant oil-cloth canopy to protect the guests of a masked ball from inclement weather, a device frequently used by festival organizers in Paris (*Description*

1740: 19). Six large entertainment buildings constructed in the capital in 1745 were also covered with oil-cloths to “protect the public from heavy rainstorms,” as it was occasionally necessary to “take over from nature” to assure the success of these exceptional projects (NA, H/2/1861: 159; *Description* 1730: 4). Particular precautions were taken for princes, princesses and representatives of royal power, such as the tents erected to “protect the ladies from the evening dew” for the Grenoble celebrations of the marriage of Louis XV (GMA, AA47). Mesh screens could be installed outside viewing windows to protect august audiences from stray fireworks—there being a far-from-negligible risk of accidents. Such an incident was recounted by one present at an event organized on the Place de Grève in 1729, “After supper, there was a magnificent fireworks display and the serpent from a rocket entered through the window where the king was to be found, brushed past his cheek and went on to burn Monsieur de Maurepair’s wig” (NMA, II 44: 153).

However, it was necessary to await the Revolution to see any real concern shown for the comfort of the public and even then it was not entirely innocent. While Revellière-Lépeaux proposed installing “convenient benches laid out in such a way that everyone has a clear view” for national celebrations on the Champ de Mars and placed a roof over the spectators to shelter them from inclement weather, it was also to avoid disturbing the patriotic impulses of the spectators and encourage them to remain concentrated and attentive to the ceremonies (Revellière-Lépeaux, an 6: 9). Similarly, in his *Projet de Cirque National de Fêtes annuelles*, Poyet proposed protecting citizens gathered on the Champ de Mars from bad weather by large tents “below which spectators would be comfortably seated, entirely protected from the inconvenience of the rain and the heat of the sun” (Poyet 1792: 10–11).

Festivals disrupted the city, transformed the way it was appreciated by its citizens and modified relationships. This *heterotopia* was based on an immersion of the public in an environment disconnected from day-to-day logic (Foucault 1984: 46–9). Constructed through the skilful assembly of myriad different devices, this new reality enveloped spectators, transporting them body and soul into an intentionally reconstructed world. It also posed significant challenges to festival organizers—weather and fireworks being the most difficult to control. There were many unknowns that could potentially ruin a festival, and only the rigor and know-how of the artists involved in these colossal undertakings made it possible to overcome these obstacles.

Making full use of available skills and know-how

Painters, draftsmen, joiners, carpenters, locksmiths, roofers, glaziers and fireworks experts were brought together under the management of a festival organizer responsible for detailing these projects and then carrying out the operations necessary for their installation. Simultaneously an architect, theater decorator and entertainment promoter, the person in charge of these delicate, expensive, politically sensitive events needed to have exceptional qualities. He needed to prove he was at ease in numerous areas of competence that demanded a wide range of knowledge and experience. Familiar with the tools, materials and techniques used for theater scenography, he had to understand the capabilities and limitations of imitation architecture—*architecture feinte*. As an architect, he had to know how to build supporting structures and be aware of the rules governing good taste and the principles of classical architecture. These skills, developed through drawings and models (Siemienowicz 1651: 381), allowed him to design festival projects much as he would architectural proposals.

Cost estimates from the era reveal that these professionals provided detailed breakdowns of the materials needed for the ephemeral constructions. The festival organizer was also responsible for completing the project on time—a production schedule that was often extremely compressed, for events that in themselves would only last a few hours.

Accurate scheduling required a thorough understanding of the logistics of each phase of the project, and organizers had to coordinate the movements of each trade on the festival site to minimize the nuisance to the life of the citizens. In other words, although they were in effect completely transforming the city, they had to do this without disturbing the functioning of urban space. And the great public festivals of the eighteenth century had to be reversible—every aspect of their creation recognized this assumption. They employed lightweight materials that were easy to assemble and dismantle. The framed scaffoldings were pre-fabricated elsewhere and parts marked before delivery, so that when the edifice went up rapidly on the festival site, it contributed to the effect of surprise evoked by Amédée-François Frézier, "we gather [the various parts of the edifice] very quickly, which gives it the additional quality of being a sudden and miraculous construction" (Frézier 1747: 452). At the end of the event, the constructions were dismantled just as quickly—bearing witness to a "certain grandeur"—to free up the space and return the city to its usual state (GDA, C 3638). Speed and precision were the key words characterizing this laborious ballet that brought in a large number of workers to carry out myriad handling tasks (NA, K 1013: 163).

The construction of a Hymen temple or a fireworks machine required vast amounts of materials to be taken to the public squares saw the risk of increasing the clutter on the sites where the festival was to take place. Several hundred or even thousands of pieces of wood were occasionally moved to city centers to give shape to these imposing constructions. When the Dauphin visited Bordeaux in 1745, nearly 5,000 pieces of wood were delivered to the contractors responsible for the construction of the triumphal arches, the Trajan's column, stables, temporary city hall venue, embarkation pontoons and fireworks machine (GDA, C 1042). Several hundred northern pine boards from Danzig, Prussia and Sweden invaded the city for the construction of these gigantic projects. The framework for the fireworks machine erected in Paris in 1757 to celebrate the birth of Comte d'Artois comprised 818 parts, all of which "raised carefully and diligently to be completely vertical on all four sides and with the cut-outs perfectly aligned to put the boards in place" (NA, K 1013: 163).

For perhaps surprisingly to some (Lecoq 1993: t.VIII, 25), these lightweight, rapidly assembled constructions were built solidly to insure the safety of both workers and audiences for the events. With respect to the framework for theater structures, Frézier commented that "the solidity of the assembly could not be neglected because, whether covered with fabrics or boards forming the decorations and thus exposed to the winds, they could be toppled by an unexpected gust" (Frézier 1747: 451). In his pyrotechnical treatise published in 1802, Claude Ruggieri recalled these precepts. For him, "solidity is the most important factor to keep in mind" when it comes to frame assemblies (Ruggieri 1802: 177). Commissions were specially mandated to assure the solidity of the works. Beausire, the general controller of buildings for the City of Paris authorities was regularly called on to check the solidity of tribunes erected on the Place de Grève. In 1729, as a timber-framed room commissioned by the Spanish ambassadors collapsed during its construction due to bad weather, it had to be inspected in great detail by M. de Cotte, the king's first architect, as well as by the lieutenant general of police dispatched by the City of Paris authorities (Daudet 1731: 150). Likewise, the six ballrooms built in the capital for the first marriage of the Dauphin in 1745 were visited during their construction:

> in the presence of the said carpenters who built them, by the Master of Carpentry Works of the said city, by the civic officials responsible for master carpenters in this city, and by Hiérôme Gaudrier, one of the king's carpenters—*charpentier ordinaire du roi*. These persons shall jointly produce an exact and detailed report and provide their opinion to the State in writing and in the proper form concerning the cover over the City Hall courtyard, the entire construction of the six public rooms and, if need be, an assessment of their complete solidity, in strict accordance with current accepted practice.
> (NA, H/2/1861: 150–1)

These measures were accompanied by safety regulations and rules concerning the pyrotechnical installations placed within and on these structures. For those parts of wooden structures exposed to fire, such as the frameworks for holding the fireworks, wood, such as oak and beech was recommended for their fire-resistant qualities. Similarly, and in compliance with recommendations by Frézier, painters used two coats of *grisaille* or distemper paint to limit risk of fire. The potential for accidents was also anticipated by providing pyrotechnicians with enclosed areas to protect them from violent fireworks. For the peace celebrations in Lyon in 1763 for example, the engineer Lallier provided "four staircases to move the structure around and manage the fireworks" in his temple of peace (LMA, AA 143: 6–7). Finally, in certain cases, workers who participated in the construction of the edifice were required to "give a hand should fire break out" (NA, K 1013: 237).

In many cases, attempts were made to minimize the expense of festival architectures by reusing components from previous events that had been stocked in the city's warehouses. Before even sketching a project, festival organizers checked the condition of warehoused items they might recycle into new compositions. Reusable scaffolding or frameworks were sorted, and illumination decor in good condition was repaired or adapted to satisfy the requirements of a new scheme. Wooden trestles, orchestra floors and baskets of artificial flowers decorating wine fountains were some of the items reused in this way (NA, K 1009: 1142, 1152). In 1757, for the birth of Comte d'Artois, part of the fireworks machine constructed for the birth of the Comte de Provence two years earlier was recuperated (NA, K 1013: 149). To celebrate the victory over Hesse and Hanover in 1758, façade decorations for houses belonging to aldermen were all "constructed from old pieces of wood from the city's warehouse," and chandeliers used to illuminate the buildings were inspected and repaired (NA, K 1013: 239, 151). Thus, underneath the spectacular glamour of the festival architecture was an enormous recycling operation employing considerable logistics. After each festival, constructions were dismantled and carefully deposited in specially prepared warehouses or directly stored in the buildings occupied by the festival. In Nantes in 1769, following the visit by the Duc de Duras, the decorations created for the commodity exchange were stored in the attic space of this building. In Paris, the city's warehouse located on the ramparts served for general festival storage, with the attic spaces in the Hôtel de Ville reserved for stockpiling the staircases, floors and tiers used for exceptional occasions in the building (NA, K 1013: 163; K 1016: 102). The structures of imitation architectures were repaired, and painted motifs restored or adapted, to meet the needs of new festivals. This also applied to the decorations and mottos on the triumphal arch erected in Nantes in 1769 and then again in 1777 for respective visits by the Duc de Duras and the Comte d'Artois. The same arch bore a triangular pediment bearing the inscription "vive le Roy, vive Duras," replaced eight years later by a transparent fabric supporting the ornamental crown bearing the arms of the Comte d'Artois accompanied by the motto *hospite divo* (LADA, C 700: 38, 65) (Figure 7.5).

The recuperation and recycling of old decors clearly raised the issue of how much it cost to produce these edifices and the time needed for their construction. In his *Cours d'architecture*, Jacques-François Blondel proposed a more radical way of prefabricating modular elements that could be assembled at will to meet the needs of the festival subjects. These would be accompanied by coats of arms, mottos, bas-reliefs, statues and trophies molded from cardboard "whose modular motifs could be assembled or reorganized" with each component being stored and available whenever required (Blondel 1771: II, VII 274). For Blondel, this system "offers the artist responsible for the festival the means to either extend his genius or remain within the confines of the instructions given to him" while also controlling the extravagant imagination of "inexperienced decorators" (Blondel 1771: II, VII 275). Concerned by the need to reduce the cost of installing these temporary structures, Blondel proposed laying out the sites where festivals were to take place by "providing permanent foundations under the paved area." This measure would avoid

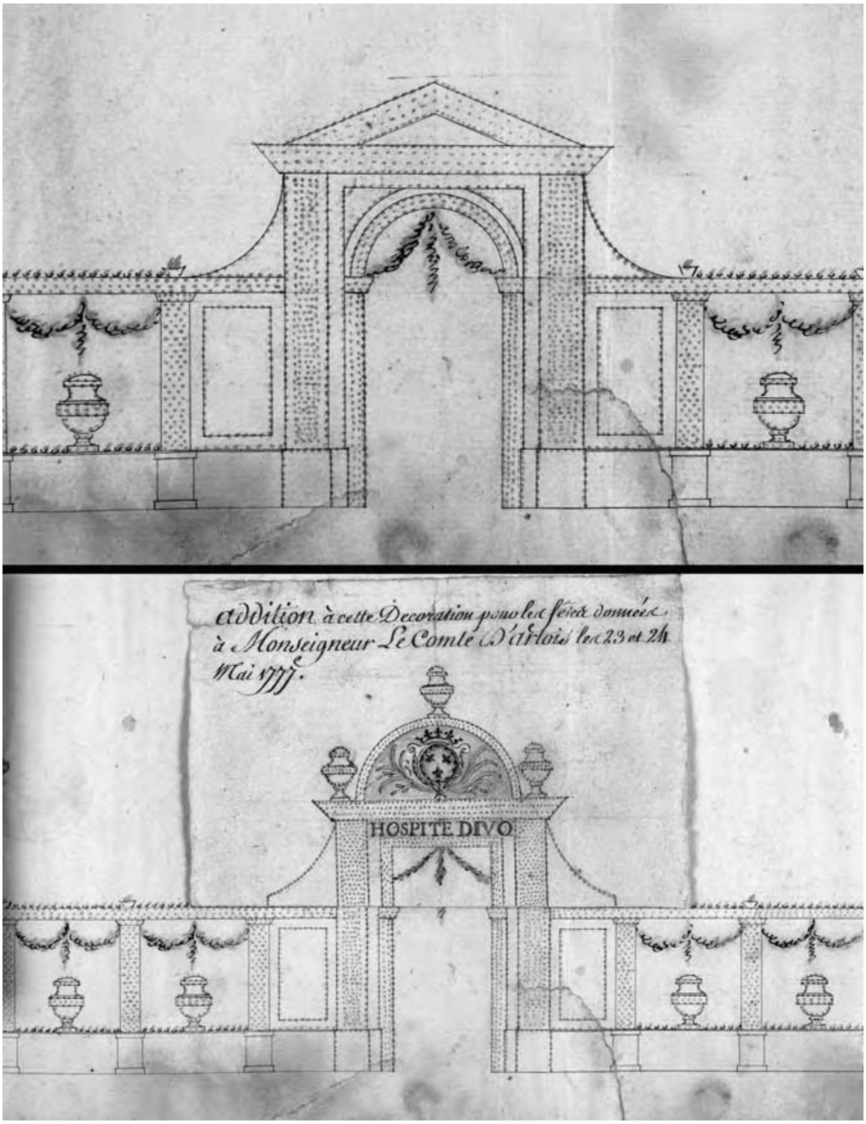

Figure 7.5 These two images show that, with a few modifications, the same décor was used for different occasions. The upper image depicts an illumination scheme erected on the Place de la Bourse in Nantes, in 1769. In the lower image, an overleaf has been attached to the original drawing, modifying the entry arch for the festivals given by the Count d'Artois eight years later. Upper image from "Vue de l'illumination de la place de la bourse faite le 23 Août 1769 . . ."; lower image "addition à cette décoration pour les fêtes données à Monseigneur Le Comte d'Artois les 23 et 24 Mai 1777." LADA, cote C 700, no. 27.

excavations in public squares and streets to install the earthworks and scaffolding for the fireworks machines. In 1746, to celebrate the victory won in Flanders, the Place de Grève was subject to:

> the digging of holes for sixteen posts, each two feet square and three to four feet deep . . . [then] these sixteen posts will be fitted and bedded using rubble and plaster [and then finally] other small posts and fence will be beaten into the ground around the small park enclosing the frames for the rockets and the girandole.
>
> (NA, K 1009: 87)

In 1771, Pierre-Louis Moreau had no hesitation digging holes around the new statue of Louis XV to anchor the chevrons bearing the lamps used to light the figurative representation of the monarch for the celebration of the marriage of the Comte de Provence (NA, K 1016: 102). Holes made in the city's surface for frameworks, the smoke from illuminations that blackened building façades, and the damage caused to the roofs of carriage gates when installing the illuminations all bear witness to the damage resulting from the festivals (NMA, AA 59: 59; NA, K 1013: 241). In this sense, ephemeral layouts were not completely reversible, since traces remained and these reinforced criticisms of such festivities. But were these significant nuisances? Did they interfere with the pleasure of the festival? It is necessary to evaluate the role of these events in terms of the satisfaction that they provided to the vast majority.

A speculative art form

Critics could simultaneously condemn the ostentatious luxury of festivals and the frugality of their "sparse fireworks"; this paradox reveals the contradictions behind such attacks on public festivity (Mercier 1776: t.I, 46). But were such critiques simply masking the anxiety of a few in the face of uncertain outcomes and a capricious art form? Skills and know-how bear witness to the existence of a sort of economy of ephemeral projects favorable to express a total art that took form in these spectacular staged events. Yet the art of festival design had its limits, some of which were set by the constraints of the festival's urban settings, some by weather, and others involving unknown factors that organizers continually encountered. Festival designers often found their intentions thwarted by existing urban conditions, unruly populations, unpredictable weather, and each festival represented a challenge to overcome these problems. It goes without saying that risks were considerable. Even in the best-planned event, things could collapse from one moment to the next, transforming a magnificent project into a catastrophic failure. Such was the case in London in 1749, when a fire erupted in a fireworks display designed by Servandoni to celebrate the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle. An even more serious disaster took place in Paris in 1770, causing the death of several hundred citizens. These catastrophes testify to the fragility of the festival organization.

Nevertheless, aware of the risks they faced and the limitations of their art, festival organizers confidently entered into these perilous undertakings that—with a little luck—would be successful. And a successful festival eclipsed the other arts, its overwhelming effects perfectly synthesizing performing with visual arts—from poetry, music and dance to painting, architecture, urban design and fireworks. Risks were forgotten, hesitations wiped away and difficulties overcome. In a matter of hours, the spatial, aesthetic and transformative logic of festivals could completely change a city. Only a speculative art form was capable of effecting such a metamorphosis; a lucid and impertinent art that reconciled the realities of difficult urban settings with the requirements of a client whose ambition was to offer the world the spectacle of a triumphant monarchy.

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Abbreviations

GDA	Gironde Departmental Archives
GMA	Grenoble Municipal Archives
LADA	Loire-Atlantic Departmental Archives
LMA	Lyon Municipal Archives
LML	Lille Municipal Library
NA	National Archives
NMA	Nantes Municipal Archives

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8

Marking time and space in the city

Kromhout's decorations for the investiture of Wilhelmina in Amsterdam

Nancy Stieber

In 1891 the young Dutch architect Willem Kromhout (1864–1940) delivered a trenchant, satirical lecture to his colleagues entitled "*Tout à l'égout.*" In his lecture Kromhout fictitiously sends all the handbooks of style, all the architectural critics, and all the practitioners of historicist architecture, whether classicist, rationalist, eclectic, or Dutch Renaissance, into the sewer to be regenerated. Meanwhile he builds a new school of architecture that teaches no conventions, invents no new style, but encourages each student to reflect his own character through the application of his natural aesthetic sense to construction and materials. When the school is ready, he revisits the sewer and finds the architects, now reformed and reconciled with each other, ready to join him and study design afresh. The handbooks of history, have, however, all disappeared (Kromhout 1891).

This witty invention, a *cri de coeur*, expressed a rhetorical idea that later became a historiographical commonplace in the modern movement, namely, that architecture incorporating past styles needed to be discarded before a new modern practice would be possible. In his magisterial account of Dutch nineteenth-century architectural debates, Auke van der Woud notes that Kromhout was expressing sentiments already widely in circulation. His eloquent and vituperative formulation of the position augured a turning point in Dutch architecture (Van der Woud 2001: 158, 162–4, 175).

Kromhout's position, as well as the modernist position more generally, is often described as a turn away from history. Yet four years after Kromhout's outcry for *tabula rasa*, he was integrally involved in the temporary reconstruction of historic Dutch buildings at the 1895 Amsterdam World's Fair and in 1898 he proposed decorations with historic content for the festive inauguration of Wilhelmina as queen. In this chapter, I will argue that architects continued to contend with history even as Dutch architecture renewed itself at the turn of the twentieth century. Historical consciousness permeated nineteenth-century mentalities, from the cultural elite to the masses (Fritzsche 2004; Koselleck 2004). While modernists and their apologists found it useful to portray themselves as jettisoning the past, acceptance of that narrative at face value has tended to conflate the imitation of historic style with the representation of history in general. Studying the ways that architects perceived, applied, and used history during the heady days of architectural debate in the late nineteenth-century forces us to reconsider issues of truth, authenticity, verisimilitude, and abstraction.

In the Netherlands, the period around 1900 resounded with clashes between Dutch Renaissance and neo-Gothic architects, and between both those camps and the self-proclaimed modernists. During those polemics, much of Kromhout's work was devoted to ephemeral architecture, both in the form of celebratory urban decorations and exhibition pavilions. This chapter aims to examine Kromhout's uses of history through several projects including a previously unstudied design of 1897 for the decorations he executed in Amsterdam on the occasion of Queen Wilhemina's investiture in 1898. The decorations occurred in the same year Kromhout received the commission for the American Hotel, his best known and most important building. The hotel, completed in 1902, is usually identified by architectural historians as a pioneering example of Dutch modernism, comparable to the better known Exchange of 1903 by H.P. Berlage (which was first published in the same year Kromhout's decorations were erected). The ephemeral nature of Kromhout's decorations has put them at some disadvantage as markers of the nascent renewal of design. Nonetheless, to Kromhout's contemporaries and to the next generation of Dutch modernists, the decorations of 1898 were recognized as a major breakthrough.

Kromhout's ephemeral work in the 1890s participated in and contributed to the on-going debate about modern architecture carried out in terms of truth, historic styles, rationalism, the picturesque, and the monumental. It participated fully in the contest between old and new schools, and between the contrasting conceptions of theatricality, illusion, authenticity, and historicity that were often explicitly but sometimes implicitly expressed in their debates. This chapter will not only consider the place of his work in those debates, but also in the history of visual culture. During the nineteenth century, the visual representation of both history and the city aimed to convey verisimilitude by capturing time and space in palpable forms (Schwartz 1998). That project intersected with urban display, that is, with exhibitions, model cities, historic pageants, and urban decoration. The argument that follows will demonstrate that Kromhout's temporary structures need to be interpreted in light of a history of visual culture in which spectacular verisimilitude made way for symbolic expression, bourgeois culture jousted with mass entertainment, architects shifted from a picturesque to a monumental perception of the city, and historical consciousness operated throughout.

Festive decoration in Amsterdam

While the Dutch do not have a rich tradition of elaborate royal entries comparable to that of their neighbors in Belgium (Von Roeder-Baumbach 1943), in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries they did orchestrate festive celebrations that included extensive urban decorations (Snoep 1975). The most renowned of these were triumphal arches for the performance of historical and allegorical tableaux erected upon the visit of Marie de Medici to Amsterdam in 1638, when the bourgeois city fathers created a lavish display for the queen meant to exalt the city as well as glorify their guest (Van Baerle, 1638; Snoep 1975, 39–64). These decorations made of wooden laths and painted cloth were derivative, the Dutch using a visual language to express politics in a manner already developed further south. The decorative impulse faltered during the Batavian Republic, the French occupation, and the first decades of the reign of the Dutch royal house of Orange-Nassau, installed in 1813 (Grijzenhout 1989). Triumphal arches, obelisks, and temples used for previous festivities were recycled; the "N" for Napoleon could be changed to a "W" for Willem; a temple erected for Napoleon might be disassembled, its parts serving anew.[1] While eighteenth- and nineteenth-century decorations abandoned the theatrical function of their predecessors, the tradition of their placement at major squares and intersections in the city was continued, thus forming a series of monumental incidents along the entry path.

The derivative nature of Dutch celebrations is in evidence at the celebration of the twenty-fifth year of Willem III's reign in 1874, when three triumphal arches that had recently been used in Antwerp were purchased by the Amsterdam organizing committee. Objections to the purchase from a nationalist point of view were overcome by assuring that the arches would be rendered unrecognizable through their newly painted decoration.[2] The architect Jan Springer (1850–1915) oversaw the revamping of these temporary constructs and produced two obelisks and three triumphal arches, two of them classical with allegorical figures.

A contemporary illustration places the monuments and entry parade in an idealized landscape with no relation to the geography of the city (Figure 8.1). Indeed, the aim of such temporary structures was to transform the city's squares, streets, and canals into celebratory *feestzalen* (reception halls); they were meant to draw attention to the festive landscape itself, not to the city, transporting the viewers to an alternative urban reality in which the illusory décor convincingly imitated masonry. In 1874, the verisimilitude of the grey and yellow painted cloth was praised for its successful representation of hewn stone, breaking with a previous practice of polychrome triumphal arches (Gram 1874: 11). Albumin photographs documenting the monuments, however, clearly show the rippling of the cloth on which heavy stone masonry was painted, so the illusion was only successful at a distance. Continuing the festive tradition from the Dutch Renaissance, urban decorations occurred as autonomous, staged incidents in the city, orchestrated for the princely entry.

Figure 8.1 The king's entry to Amsterdam, 1874. From left to right: triumphal arch on the Dam, obelisk on Kattenburg, castellated arch on Jonas Daniël Meyerplein, the decorated Willemspoort, triumphal arch on the Botermarkt (Rembrandtplein), mammoth bouquet on Koningsplein. From *Katholieke Illustratie* no. 46 (1873/74) With kind permission of the Dutch Royal Archives.

Alongside the decorations sponsored by the committee of 1874, unofficial decorations were also privately erected by neighborhoods, sometimes organized by individual craftsmen. A carpenter distributed a circular illustrating an illuminated pyramid draped with greenery and flowers which he proposed to erect on a floating pedestal on a canal. A florist offered to string garlands of evergreen and lamps canalside at 1.75 guilders per meter[3] (RHA, Documentatie 1874). Some neighborhood committees could afford to hire architects to design and erect their own triumphal arches. In the poorer streets, the neighbors constructed their own decorations (Gram 1874). These generally followed the conventions established by the official decorations, accompanied by more spontaneous expressions on façades. Elites and masses shared a common visual language of celebration that included monumental illusions of masonry construction.

In 1874 another form of decoration, one that evoked history itself, appeared alongside those that manifested the historical continuity of the triumphal arches. A plan was drafted to decorate the *Commandanthuis* on the Dam as Castle Dillenburg, the seat of the Nassaus, but this was abandoned. Instead, an arch in imitation of a generalized medieval castle was erected (Figure 8.1).

Although it was not intended to replicate a particular building, it was perceived as a historical representation, in contrast with the classical triumphal arches whose meaning lay in their continuation of past decorative practices. The medieval castle spoke to the historical imagination. It became a conduit for the projection of immediate and visceral historical experience, what Johan Huizinga would later call "historic sensation" (Huizinga 1950). As a report in the newspaper, the *Amsterdamsche Courant*, put it:

> The effect that this old-fashioned building has in our modern time is quite refreshing and it was indeed a happy thought to have such a depiction, which vividly calls to mind the days of our valiant forefathers, so faithfully fabricated.
>
> (*AC* 1874)

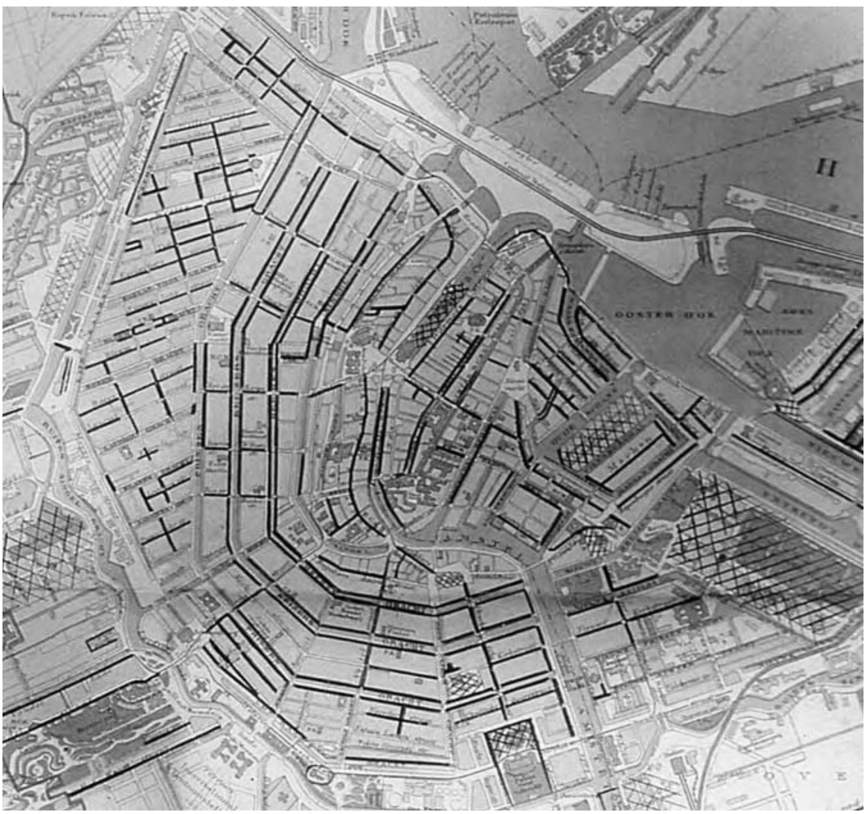

Figure 8.2 Map of locations of neighborhood decorations compiled by the Executive Committee for the Decorations on the occasion of the king's 70th birthday, 1887. From PA 55/12 Bijlage 7 Eindrapport. *Uitvoerend Comité voor de Aprilfeesten ter gelegenheid van de 70e verjaardag van Koning Willem III 1887.* Courtesy Amsterdam City Archives.

The summoning of the past via the imitation of past architecture was not unrelated to the romantic impulse to produce historical novels and dramas or history painting. Such urban decoration not only staged the city for the princely entry but addressed the public by offering an opportunity for direct transportation to the past, making history a public spectacle.

On the occasion of King Willem III's seventieth birthday in 1887, despite the unpopularity of the monarch, nearly the entire city of Amsterdam took the opportunity to decorate itself lavishly (Figure 8.2).[4] The committee of prominent citizens preparing the festivities introduced a new system of coordinating the decorations erected by neighborhoods, taking charge themselves only of the decoration of the Dam. There Jan Springer transformed an existing pedestal on carrying the personification of the Netherlands into a Renaissance *socle* decorated with allegorical images. No fewer than 189 neighborhood committees were registered in the official guidebook, their decorative plans reviewed and improved by a committee member, the architect Isaac Gosschalk (1838–1907).[5] While these decorations varied immensely in style and quality with few exceptions they continued the convention of permanent structures with impermanent materials and all depended on past styles, albeit in increasingly eclectic combinations drawing from a range of sources (Figure 8.3). On the Gelderschekade, a so-called "Moorish temple," was erected on the Amstelveld, a Chinese pagoda. On Thorbeckeplein the architect Gerrit van Arkel designed a Renaissance baldaquin. Other architects, such as Abraham Salm and Eduard Cuypers produced eclectic designs. Gosschalk floated a six-sided classical temple on two barges in the Buiten-Amstel. P.J.H. Cuypers created a monumental crenellated triumphal arch decorated with heraldic arms related to the royal family and topped with flags in the national colors, each designated by Cuypers with a different significance.

In addition to the conventional imitations of triumphal arches, some of the more popular decorations again evoked history. The committee on the Gasthuismolensteeg recreated the mill for which the street had been named, perching it above an imitation gate in the city walls as depicted on the famed 1544 plan of Amsterdam by Cornelis Antonisz (Figure 8.4). This literal attempt at reconstruction led admirers to comment on its faithful image of the past in terms not unlike those used for the 1874 castle. "In the evening, with the mysterious lighting of the gates and the mill, one imagines oneself transported to the sixteenth century" (*Volledige officieele feestgids* 1887: 14). Once again, the temporary construct became a vehicle for historic sensation. The most popular of the decorations was Gosschalk's reconstruction of a seventeenth century Dutch galleon, a ship placed at the most prestigious turn of the Herengracht canal (Figures 8.3, 8.5). This was a literal reconstruction built with the usual wooden laths and painted cloth but now in aid of recalling Holland's glorious mercantile history. One newspaper report claimed:

> If one only stood before it without having seen the preparatory activities, the laths and cloth, and the hundreds of people jostling each other at the

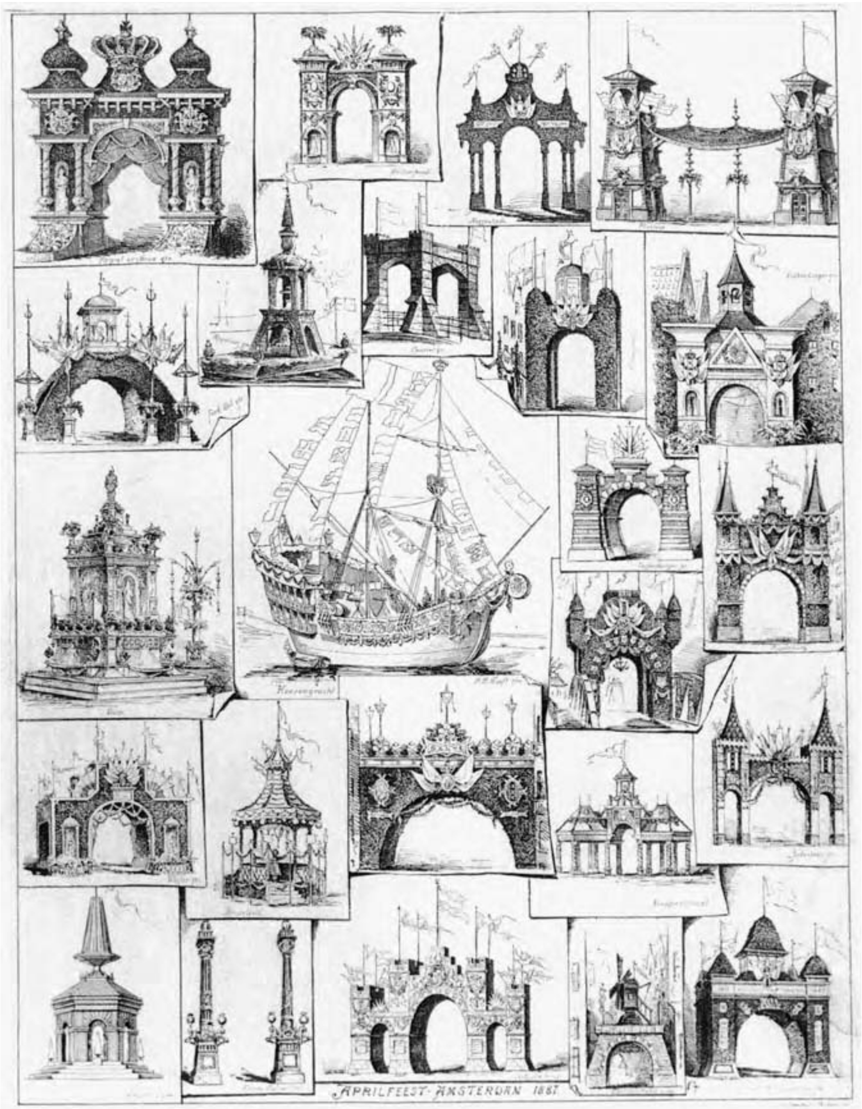

Figure 8.3 Composite drawing of decorations for the king's 70th birthday, 1887. Courtesy Amsterdam City Archives.

Figure 8.4 Gastmolensteeg, 1887. From G.J. Slothouwer, *Amsterdam in Feestgewaad, Souvenir aan het Koningsfeest in April 1887.* From the author's collection.

> edge of the canal, one would, with a bit of imagination, honestly be able to go back in one's mind to the Spanish era and the apogee and fame of the Dutch fleet.[6]
>
> (AMA E123 1887)

The reporter from the *Nieuwsblad voor Nederland*, on the other hand, found that the seams and the holes in the cladding as well as the clumsy painting betrayed the conceit.[7] His objection was not to the attempt at recreating the past, but to its inexpert execution.

Nonetheless, these contemporary reactions already reveal the tension between the desire to embrace the illusion of visiting the past and the unavoidable observation of conditions that could undermine that illusion, such as the contrast with evident signs of contemporaneity or the evident falsity of the materials.

Figure 8.5
The "Galjoot" designed by I. Gollschalk, 1887. From G.J. Slothouwer, *Amsterdam in Feestgewaad, Souvenir aan het Koningsfeest in April 1887*. From the author's collection.

The public's willingness to suspend disbelief was correlated to the pleasure gained from enjoying the illusion. The historic displays participated in the larger cultural phenomenon of nationalist expression via a variety of means. The legacy of the Dutch Golden Age had long figured in the public imagination, but in the last quarter of the nineteenth century it became integral to Dutch national identity. The heroes of the sea, the great artists, and the members of the House of Orange became *topoi* of commemoration and celebration. The forms of that celebration, influenced by the Romantic urge for verisimilitude, found expression in means of communication that made history palpable to the senses. This period saw the rise of the *maskerade*, in which university students would recreate the joyful entries of the sixteenth and seventeenth century, carefully dressing themselves in costumes as historically accurate as possible. In 1874, the king's anniversary was celebrated by a historical-allegorical parade, in which citizens played the roles of his sixteenth- and seventeenth forebears accompanied by famed figures of the time. While the decorations erected for Marie de Medici in 1638 presented allegorical performances celebrating her own and Amsterdam's history, now entries like hers were being reenacted. Urban decorations in the form of historic reconstructions associated with the House of Orange or with the iconic events of the Golden Age became part of this enactment of the past. The very theatricality that marked them as effective means to transport a willing public to the past would, however, become increasingly suspect as cultural definitions of authenticity and truthfulness in representation shifted.

Berlage: urban aesthetics, design, and decoration

Urban decorations were considered a significant aspect of architectural practice and discourse. The several ways in which the young architect H.P. Berlage (1856–1934) became involved with the 1887 festivities are indicative. He did not personally design any of the decorations for the king's birthday, but he served on the jury judging them. He contributed illustrations for the official guidebook of the event, sketching triumphal arches in a light-hearted and urbane way. He wrote a comedy entitled "The architect *en famille*" which featured a design for the 1887 festivities by an architect named Berlage: a decorative gate on a bridge flooded in a sea of light (Berlage 1887). More seriously, in 1889 he published a long article on the history of festive decorations from antiquity to the present from which he derived criteria for judging the recent decoration of Amsterdam and recommendations for future decorations (Berlage 1889).

Berlage begins his article by posing the question whether the recent decorations of Amsterdam had been tasteful. He uses the commonplace metaphor of "festive dress" (*feestkleed*).[8] From here he declares the importance of cladding (*bekleeding*) for art history and, based on Semper's theory of *Bekleidung*, refers to the hypothesis that all monumental art finds its basis there, arguing that the festive wooden triumphal arch of the Roman Republic gave way to the permanent one of the empire (Berlage 1889: 27). He then proceeds to describe the history of festivities from antiquity, drawing his examples directly from Semper's discourse on the topic in *Stil in den technischen und tektonischen Künsten* (Semper 2004: 277–87).

In 1887, an author reviewing the decorations for the architectural journal *De Opmerker* had remarked that Amsterdam's picturesque beauty lent itself to decoration (DO 1887: 113). The official guide to the celebrations had made a similar point: whereas other cities must wrestle with their monotonous layouts of cumbersome blocks along straight streets, the irregularity of Amsterdam's picturesque beauty brings a special pleasure in its decoration (*Geïllustreerde Feestgids* 1887: 16). Berlage takes a completely opposite position. Precisely because Amsterdam's beauty is picturesque, he argues, it is difficult of find an appropriate form of decoration (Berlage 1889: 33). Southern cities with the regular lines of their monumental architecture are easier to decorate, "where grand perspectives and monumental lines are present in a city, the decorative embellishment of that perspective is always rewarding and purest in style" (Berlage 1889: 33). In a previous article, Berlage had distinguished between the picturesque character of the medieval section of Amsterdam dating from before 1544 and the monumentality of the grand canals of the seventeenth century, assigning a greater value to the latter (Berlage 1883). Now echoing that argument, he notes again that the three great canals form the only monumental lines in the city. These, then, offer the opportunity for "a continuous, thus perspectival decoration, as long as it is conceived as uninterrupted and magnificent" (Berlage 1889: 33).[9]

However, Berlage found that the decorations put up in 1887 along the main canals, the Herengracht and Keizersgracht, had produced a shabby and unfortunate impression (Berlage 1889: 30). Others agreed. The final report of the 1887 organizing committee noted, "The unity that was achieved relatively easily in streets and in more or less self-contained canals was most hard to come by on the extended canals [. . .] the decoration of the canals must then be considered the least successful" (PA 55/2 *Eindrapport* 1887). Berlage makes his prescription for future decorations clear. They must be isolated from the façades of the buildings. Illumination should be continuous, not broken up, thus accentuating the monumental, straight, perspectival lines of the city. Berlage suggested that long festoons of lighting along the canals reveal their monumental perspective; the trains of lighting in 1887 failed because they were not grandly conceived. Illumination should take advantage of its reflection in the water, he suggests, not unlike what occurs in the mirrors of a ballroom. Accordingly, the lights should be placed as close as possible to the water (Berlage 1889: 34–5).

As for canals and streets with irregular lines, such as those in the older part of the city, Berlage suggests that their decorations be restricted to isolated triumphal arches and obelisks. He recommends illuminated constructs on bridges, such as the one mentioned in his play. However, all such decorations must truthfully express their temporary nature: any attempt to make a classical triumphal arch with painted imitation of stone is to be decried. A decoration should not be a mock-up for a building to be erected in stone; rather it should be decorative, polychromatic, if need be, completely painted (Berlage 1889: 33–4).

With this set of recommendations, Berlage raised two important points. First, he introduced the spatial analysis of the city's character as the basis for assessing its decoration, in parallel to the spatial analysis he had already applied to the study of urban design. His assessment belonged to a wider, new awareness of the aesthetic character of the city that was arising in part as a reaction to the rapid urban extensions that were accompanying economic revival in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. In 1877 Amsterdam had established a plan for growth that laid out disconnected gridded neighborhoods whose long straight streets contrasted with the irregulars forms of the older city. At the same time, the city embarked on a process of transformation, filling canals and flattening bridges to improve transportation. As the familiar city disappeared, the contrast between a perceived dreariness to the new districts and the charms of the old shifted the aesthetic perception of the city. The discovery of a picturesque perception of the city in art also contributed to the development of a new architectural analysis of urban form. Among others, Cornelis Springer's dazzling paintings of Dutch cities of the seventeenth century, complete with figures in historic costume, had helped spur architects' interest in the national architectural style of the Golden Age (Laanstra 1984 *et al.*; Van Leeuwen 1994). Springer's entrancing cityscapes, which depicted Amsterdam and other Dutch cities as he imagined them in the past, not only contributed to a reassessment of the value of Golden Age architecture to contemporary practice, but also catalyzed appreciation for what was being lost in the modernization of the city.

Second, Berlage expressed a growing distaste for Romantic verisimilitude and theatricality—which must be seen in conjunction with the contemporary call for the honest expression of function, material, and construction, and parallel to the nascent reaction against imitation in architectural styles. By 1887, the revival of Dutch Renaissance style in architecture with its patriotic associations had been in full swing for nearly twenty years. Unlike some others who were already questioning it, Berlage himself had not yet challenged the supremacy of that style, nor the practice of what later was dubbed "style-architecture," but his essay on urban decorations reveals the corrosive effect of current architectural theory which was redefining "truthfulness" in architecture and thus building a logic that would eventually be used to attack historicism on the basis of its dishonest relationship to the current epoch.

Berlage's argument against the false representation of masonry in urban decorations was accompanied by an aversion to the theatricality it implied, the very illusionism used in the Romantic evocation of the past. Painted masonry and other illusionistic techniques were central to Romantic stagecraft, which in this period was reaching heights of antiquarian accuracy, whether applied to the costumes of parading students or to dramatic stage productions. It could have been argued that a true expression of the commemorative function of urban decorations required the techniques of the theater, itself a temporary show. Instead, Berlage argued that they required materials and construction true to their temporary nature. But we can also discern Berlage's suspicion of the visceral communication through sensation constitutive of illusionism, in his off-hand remark following an example he cites from Semper. Semper mentions the paintings exhibited in the Roman forum by Hostilius Mancinus of his heroic deeds at the storming of Carthage. Semper describes, and Berlage repeats, how Mancinus personally explained these representations of history to the public (Semper 2004: 285)—to this, Berlage adds the comment "just like the commentators on murders at fun fairs today" (Berlage 1889: 26). Berlage's association between urban decoration meant to narrate history and contemporary sensationalist mass entertainment is revealing. Until the end of the nineteenth century, "spectacular" attempts at the theatricality of verisimilitude remained well within the purview of the architect designing ephemeral architecture. However, this approach would become increasingly subject to criticism and eventually a gulf would emerge between mass pleasure in illusion and the cultural elite's preference for what they considered to be an honest representation of reality.

Kromhout and historic reconstruction in "Oud Holland" in 1895

In 1891, when Kromhout condemned all historicism to the gutter, he had already worked with the distinguished Dutch Renaissance architects Jan Springer and Isaac Gosschalk, who had so prominently contributed to the decoration of Amsterdam in 1874 and 1887. Yet despite his rejection of historic imitation, in 1895 he took a leading role in the construction of a model Dutch city, *Oud Holland* (Old Holland) at the Amsterdam World's Fair for Hostelry and Travel.[10] Gosschalk had first proposed construction of an Oud-Amsterdam, a partial reconstruction of the old city ("Oud-Amsterdam" 1894; Rössing 1895: 13). The plan was taken over and transformed by the organizers of the world's fair. Oud Holland would follow a formula most recently successful at the 1894 fair in Antwerp where a large, open market square appropriate for festive theatrical displays was surrounded by mock-ups of old buildings (Thijs 1993; Uyttenhove 1993). In Oud Holland, buildings from fourteen Dutch cities and dating from the fifteenth through seventeenth centuries were meticulously reconstructed, enclosing a market square at one end and a short canal at the other (Figure 8.6). Interspersed were fanciful buildings meant to evoke the past without specific models.[11]

Figure 8.6 Oud Holland from Guy de Coral, *Souvenir de l'Exposition Amsterdam 1895.* From the author's collection.

This attempt to make history palpable and entertaining parallels the painting of picturesque cityscapes by Cornelis Springer, and more especially the seventeenth-century Market Square he designed for an exhibition on foodstuffs held in Amsterdam in 1887 (De Jong 2001: 189–93). The exhibition's merit was viewed as "conveying a palpable memory of architecture" (Matha 1887: 60). Here, as in the historical paintings, storekeepers and craftsman could be seen dressed in historic costume—yet in contrast to his paintings, in Springer's urban stagecraft they jostled with citizens dressed in everyday modern garb. The architects of the "seventeenth century" buildings comprised a veritable honor roll of contemporary practice: Cornelis's brother Willem Springer and Willem's sons Jan Springer and Ko Springer, as well as C. Muysken, Abraham Salm, and Ed Cuypers. That the painter Cornelis Springer's impact was architectural rather than strictly artistic was undisputed. In the year before the construction of Oud Holland, his paintings were hung in the architectural, not the painting section, of an exhibition entitled "Amsterdam then and now." A reviewer of the exhibition commented, "Particularly important for the architectural practitioner are the works of Springer because of his artistic representation of architectonic detail" ("Amsterdam Voorheen en Thans": 142). But the public also enjoyed the 1887 exhibition, and one newspaper critic remarked, "How often will visitors of the market square, in their elation over such an uncommonly lovely imitation of the past, have lamented, "If only this could last longer than three months" (AMA D117 manuscript: scrapbook of newspaper clippings from 1887).

Fashioned similarly to Springer's market square, Oud Holland was by far the most popular exhibit at an otherwise lackluster fair. Every opportunity was taken to create for visitors a total experience of the past, engaging all senses. Costumed guards and retailers evoked the Dutch Golden Age of the seventeenth century, Marie de Medici's entry into Amsterdam was reenacted, a daily newspaper in antiquated print was published, visitors could become *poorters*—citizens—of Oud Holland (Rijkens and Rössing 1895; De Jong 2001: 193–200). As one guidebook explained, the Oud Holland of the exhibition, "fully illuminates the light-hearted and fleeting side of our forefathers' lives, their joyous entries and splendid celebrations" (Kalff 1895: 6). The success of the illusion was frequently praised in the press in the familiar terms of individual historic experience, "Entering there one is transposed in thought a few centuries back" ("Wereld-Tentoonstelling" 1895: 146). Oud Holland, like Gosschalk's ship of 1887, was a temporary theatrical device intended to bring the public into contact with history. Both appealed to national pride through reference to the glorious Dutch past.

But Oud Holland also represented a standard against which current urban design could be judged. Its picturesque beauty was frequently contrasted with current urban expansions considered dull, or as one reporter put it after praising Oud Holland's revival of the past, "in future centuries would anyone come up with the bright idea of attempting a reproduction of our standard new districts where the dismal and monotonous straight lines of the gutters point to a dire end, to barren death?" (J.J.d.R. 1895: 7). The historicist interest in Oud Holland as embodying the picturesque beauty of old cities was the equivalent for town planning to the architectural historicism that had given rise to the Dutch Renaissance revival.

Kromhout's interest in the historic reconstructions at Oud Holland only four years after his 1891 polemical outcry against stylistic imitation must raise questions about the motivation for his involvement. He had evolved his anti-historicist position in other outbursts of animosity against lack of originality, such as his vehement critique of Jan Springer's new City Theater of 1894. Here Kromhout castigated "the age of reproduction" in which "one proceeded on the basis of various styles and considered the meticulous knowledge of these forms tested against the laws of the classical formal language, which the architect needs in the first place to give form to his thoughts" (Kromhout 1894a: 149). Oud Holland itself would seem to be an exercise in "the meticulous knowledge" of stylistic forms.

Indeed, reconstructions such as Oud Holland were taken quite seriously within the architectural community. The dean of Dutch architects, P.J.H. Cuypers, designer of the Rijksmuseum and Central Station in Amsterdam, contributed to it the gates from a building he was then restoring and transforming, Castle De Haar, itself a fine example of paradoxical reconstruction of an imagined past and a building Kromhout had roundly criticized for impeding new developments in art (Kromhout 1894b). The architect in charge of the restoration of the city gates of Nijmegen offered his plans as the basis for the version created at Oud Holland. After Oud Holland was opened, sixty members of the Society for the Advancement of Architecture met there and were given a tour. At a lecture to the members of the architectural society Architectura et Amicitia, Kromhout described Oud Holland in detail to his audience, illustrating his talk with eighty scale drawings. He explained the careful research into prints and other graphic resources used for the reconstruction of the sixteenth-century Amsterdam town hall and other buildings at Oud Holland. The selection of buildings, he made clear, was based on a number of factors including which buildings architects tend to find beautiful, which compose a pleasant grouping, and which reflect the national history of architecture ("Architectura et Amicitia" 1895; "Oud-Holland" 1895). Thus the selection was about both aesthetics (of architecture and urban design) and history.

In his 1891 tirade, Kromhout had relegated all the art history books to the sewer. But he had also suggested that students would read history in the curriculum of his new school. That was meant to be history which promoted no particular style, but made available the architecture of the past for students to discover the deep interrelationships between construction, material, and form (Kromhout 1891: 388). Only the stylistic handbooks had been exiled—books intended to inculcate the practice of following precedence, that is, creative imitation. Yet Oud Holland, with its range of examples drawn only from the Dutch Renaissance, gave every appearance of being a three-dimensional style album, a visualized form of the erudite books that had appeared in the previous twenty years to provide an account for this period of Dutch architecture (Van der Woud 2001: 118). One guidebook to the world's fair noted that Kromhout and the fair's general architect E. Bremen called Oud Holland "a visualized art history of Dutch architecture" (*Wereld Tentoonstelling* 1895: 10). It is significant that the official guidebook to Oud Holland provided a clear outline of Dutch architectural history of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, praising the return to Dutch renaissance style in the second half of the nineteenth century (Kalff 1895: 22–6). It is difficult to reconcile the polemicist of 1891 with the willing participant in this monument to stylistic imitation. Indeed, so strongly did Kromhout feel about the purity of the project, that he publicly criticized Bremen and the organizers of Oud Holland for the laxity that allowed a flood of commercial advertisements to scar the mock cityscape. He even accused them of failing to execute architectural details accurately (Kromhout 1895).

Was Kromhout being inconsistent? Did his theoretical position outstrip his practice? If so, he was in good company. As Van der Woud describes the period, "the young architects' words and actions are fraught with contradictions" (Van der Woud 2001: 154). By the 1890s it had long been apparent to a younger generation that the imitation of historic styles was a dead end; but alternatives to historic precedent were not evident. Indeed, the repeated complaint that the nineteenth century had failed to produce a unifying style could be found expressed by old guard Dutch Renaissance revivalists as well as by those representing other strains. The practice of examining old architecture first hand had become embedded in architectural training, Kromhout had first made a name for himself on the basis of his travel sketches (Jager 1992: 134–5) and he continued this practice. In 1893, he published his drawings of the restored medieval building Het Steen in Antwerp—observing the picturesque compositions while at the same time tacitly lending his approval to restoration and imaginative reconstruction (Kromhout 1893, see also Van der Woud 2001: 124–7). And in 1894 when he visited the exhibition of Old Antwerp which would serve as a model for Oud Holland the following year, Kromhout noted that while architects vacillated about making anything modern, they felt confident when it came to reproducing works from previous centuries. Indeed, he judged it a sound idea in Antwerp to provide the public some compensation for the failure of the new exhibition buildings by creating the beautiful and harmonious market square composed of historic reproductions (Kromhout 1894c).

Fine distinctions between the educative, the entertainment, and the commercial value of Oud Holland were lost on other commentators such as several contributors to the progressive journal *De Kroniek*, the vibrant mouthpiece of modern young Dutch intellectuals. During the exhibition, *De Kroniek* ran scathing critiques of the pseudo-buildings, theatrics, and paraphernalia of Oud Holland. Oud Holland was sham; truth was preferable; the forced picturesque juxtaposition of varied architecture failed to interpret a genuine old Dutch mood (Kalff 1895).[12] *De Kroniek* burst the balloon of bourgeois self-complacency that characterized Oud Holland and related cultural expressions. By 1895, nostalgic evocation of an old Holland in a modern city had become pathetically "corny" and inauthentic for a segment of the cultural elite.[13] Within a few years, the reconstructed village as a type was described as a phenomenon of "our times in which the veneration of the past became a kind of sport" (Koopmans 1907: 188). The fantasy cities erected at exhibitions succeeded at representing the "typical" old city, it was argued, but that type was an illusion, despite the accuracy of the imitation. By plucking the buildings from their original context to form an album of building styles, the designers had forced on the buildings an arbitrary connection to place and time that they had never actually had, it was claimed (Koopmans 1907: 189). By 1919 the contradiction between the illusionistic past and modernity at such installations had become fully evident:

> For an instant you get an entertaining illusion, but it's not vivid, fulsome life. Ultimately you realize it is only comedy and exhibitionism in the middle of modern society. Behind the lathwork that represents the city hall over there, the electric tram is roaring by [. . .] The new generation has become aware of the contrived, the unreal, the deceitful, the fake without a soul
>
> (Prinsen 1919: 71–2)

Oud Holland was the last of the mocked-up villages to be given scholarly attention by Dutch architects.[14] Its illusion of entering the past, of making history palpable to the senses, was the swan-song of architecture's engagement with romantic verisimilitude. For the population at large, however, this mode continued into the twentieth century with historical allegorical parades and model historic cities. A gulf would emerge between the architects' notion of historical representation and that of spectacular entertainment.

Marking history and space in 1897–8

In 1898 Willem Kromhout became the first architect of his generation to set his stamp on the decoration of Amsterdam for a major event, displacing the older generation and in particular Jan Springer. In contrast with the last major celebration in 1887, when the popularity of Dutch Renaissance style was at its peak, by 1898 new forms had emerged that indicated that the reign of Queen Wilhelmina starting that year would coincide with important changes in architectural culture. During the preparations for the 1898 investiture of Princess Wilhelmina as queen, Kromhout explored an alternative mode of historic decoration. His innovative proposal for the decorations radically shifted existing practices of urban decoration while also recasting the space of the city as the visual representation of history.

In September 1896, Kromhout was invited to join the committee of Amsterdammers planning the city's extensive festivities for the investiture as representative of the architectural society *Architectura et Amicitia*, proponents of architectural renewal. He soon proposed decoration of the Frederiksplein for a choral celebration, but this plan was rejected by the police because the square could not safely accommodate the anticipated number of viewers (AMA PA 71/1 September 17, 1896 and October 29, 1896). As one of the few artists or architects on the committee, Kromhout was invited to join a subcommittee to oversee all the decorations (AMA PA 71/1 January 26, 1897).

The subcommittee was divided over the question of how much authority to exert over the decorations. It could, as in 1887, supervise the disparate plans proposed by neighborhood committees and designed by a panoply of architects, building contractors, and amateurs or, on the other hand, it could take the lead by providing what the committee members called a "central plan" that would introduce unity of design. The chairman of the main architectural society aligned himself with the former position. As in the past, each area should form a separate whole, but overall unity would be impossible to achieve. Kromhout then announced that he had a central plan. In February 1897 he presented the subcommittee with drawings of a striking proposal. The intent, he explained, was to depict the old city as it had been before the great extension of the seventeenth century. Some points, such as the *Schreyerstoren* (Weeping Tower) were still in existence, other towers would need to be copied "as they were" (*gelijk zij waren*); all would be linked along the boundary of the old city with a repeating and simple wall-pattern (*muur-motif*) (AMA PA 71/17 February 9, 1897).

With this proposal, Kromhout appeared to be applying the methods of Oud Holland by inviting the reconstruction of monuments with historic accuracy—"as they were." However, the reconstruction of the old city wall and its towers was not to take place within the confines of an exhibition creating its own imaginary space of history, it was to commemorate the actual boundary of the city on its original site. The proposal thus put forward a different form of historic experience: that of using temporary decorations to evoke the idea of the city's history by summoning up through a physical representation the recollection of what had been demolished. As such, the city would become a stage set of itself. While the copied towers and gates would provide a degree of verisimilitude in the mode well known both from the imitation triumphal arches of previous festivities and the mock buildings of Oud Holland, these would, by virtue of their location and in conjunction with the proposed decoration along the canals that had encircled the old wall, reconstitute a symbolic line through the city representing its sixteenth-century boundary. Kromhout proposed that each neighborhood contribute to the construction of one of the towers or gates of the wall. This was a concept at a scale beyond any previous decoration in Amsterdam.

For the city wall itself, Kromhout had rejected the methods of Oud Holland altogether. The symbolic rather than reconstructed nature of the repeating and simple wall-pattern became more evident a few weeks later when Kromhout presented the subcommittee with sketch designs and detailed proposals for the

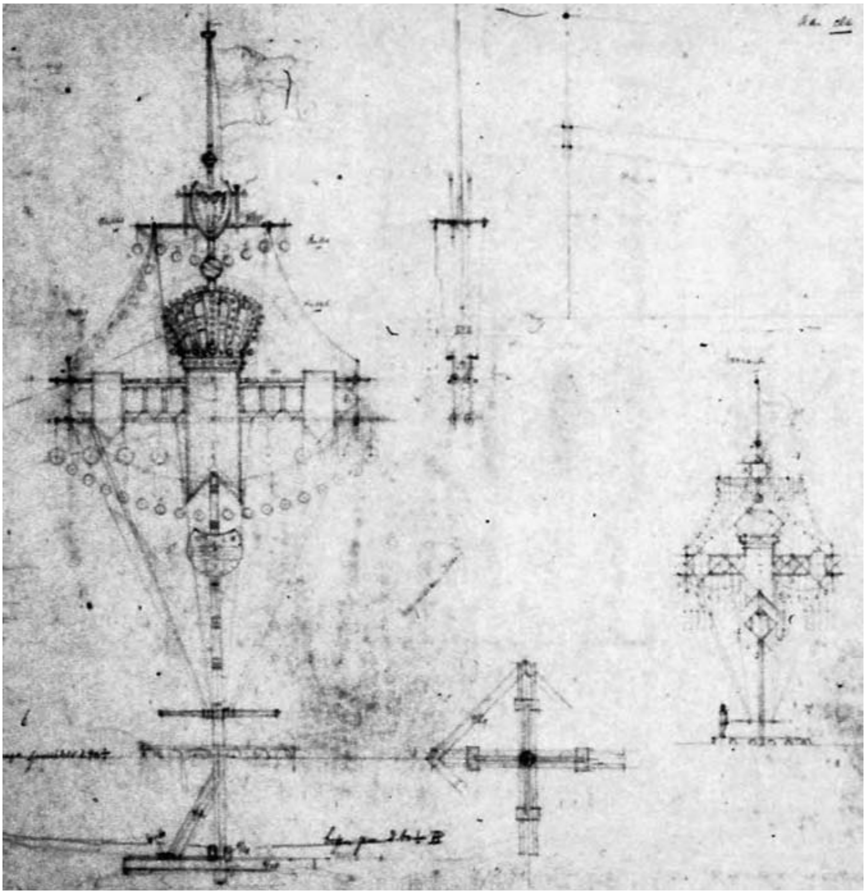

Figure 8.7 Willem Kromhout, Sketch for canal decoration, 1897, detail. Pencil drawing. From the Kromhout Archive, with kind permission of the Netherlands Architecture Institute.

decoration of the canals (AMA PA 71/17 February 22, 1897) (Plate 8a). The old city "wall" was not to be rebuilt in imitation of masonry, but was to be represented by a series of repeating motifs tracing its outline in the canals encircling the extent of the old city. High masts with a standardized form would be floated on the water; the encircling canal (*ringgracht*) would be divided into eleven sections, each representing one of the eleven Dutch provinces. Notes and drawings on a pencil sketch indicate that each mast would be topped by the royal standard or national flag and would carry a painted wooden cross topped by a crown, the arms of one province in the center and flanked by the arms of its municipalities on either side (Figure 8.7). Strings of colored lamps would link the masts, demarcating the boundary of the old city with a continuous abstract and visual line.

With this proposal, Kromhout brilliantly answered many of the problems of urban decoration that had been raised by Berlage and which had become common objections to previous decoration. Kromhout's project realized Berlage's prescriptions for the urban decoration of Amsterdam on a monumental scale, emphasizing the spatial character of the city through the use of the main canals and separation from the picturesque façades. Additionally, Kromhout's masts rejected the imitation of historic styles while adopting conventional signs such as the flags and arms. Constructed of painted wooden laths without any covering, the decorations on the masts were to be polychrome; by using ordinary materials whose construction was made visibly apparent, they would honestly convey their ephemeral character. Or, as Kromhout put it in a lecture given in 1901, as with any architecture, so also with decoration the material employed should be revealed for what it is, not concealed (Kromhout 1901). The masts were to punctuate the straight lengths of canals and bring festoons of continuous lighting over the water, taking advantage of the reflections, as Kromhout noted to the subcommittee. These features responded directly to Berlage's prescriptions.

Kromhout's continuous forms in the canals proposed the first instance of a spatial configuration of urban decoration, thus creating a continuous and unified conception in contrast with the usual incidental placement of monumental forms on festive occasions. As he explained in the 1901 lecture, urban decoration should take advantage of the characteristics of a street or canal, but then heighten the effect through contrast in form, color, and nature, through order and repetition (Kromhout 1901: 137). By separating the decorations from the façades and placing them along, in, and over the canals, Kromhout arrived at a powerful form of decoration that emphasized the spatial character of the city at its most monumental. This conception of the unified decoration of a historic line would have been impossible without the previous development of the idea of the monumental space of the canals as an aesthetic category of thought.

Earlier decorations had also made use of masts. Jan Springer had attached masts to the perimeter of a tent erected for the 1891 visit of the German Kaiser to Amsterdam. Springer's masts, like Kromhout's, were topped by flags, decorated with arms, and linked by festoons. In 1887 decorations had been floated as Kromhout now proposed. But Kromhout's proposal differed from these previous cases because the masts were not intended to adorn a construct or appear in isolation on the water, but rather to mark both the space and the history of the city. His was a grand conception that encompassed the monumental lines of the city while simultaneously communicating its history. He had understood the advantage of Gosschalk's galleon of 1887 which had transformed the water of a main canal into a festive spectacle. That ship had not only titillated the public because of its dramatic lighting reflected in the water, it had spoken directly to the nautical associations of the Dutch in their nationalist pride in the seventeenth-century maritime empire. Distancing himself equally from the imitation of past buildings and from dramatized historic experience, Kromhout instead evoked a more symbolic method for representing history. As he explained, his use of masts had been inspired by ship's rigging with its ropes, pennants, and pegs, whose implicit maritime character seemed to him to produce a particular Dutch manner of decoration symbolically (Kromhout 1901: 137). Placed along a historic line in the city, they evoked a different kind of historic consciousness, one which by its symbolic nature contrasted with the verisimilitude of historic reconstructions. It replaced the thrill of historic sensation due to illusionistic stagecraft with intuitive access to history through the abstractions of space, form, and symbol. Instead of the staggered appearance of staged history along the entry path, Kromhout proposed the city as staging taking advantage of its intrinsic spatial qualities in what must have seemed an honest revelation of the city's forms. With this proposal, the city would become the stage of history in contrast with previous decorations that staged the city of the past.

To prepare for a competition for the design of the decorations, a small group of the decorations subcommittee, including Kromhout, considered his proposal carefully and came up with an alternative, dubbed "the historic line." This was "the artery of the city, the river from which the city takes its name" and ran along the Damrak, Rokin, to the Binnen-Amstel, route of the Amstel River through the city (AMA PA 71/17, February 22, 1897). The historic line became the basis for the competition, with the option of adding to it the encircling canals of Kromhout's "historic plan." Kromhout himself had argued against the need for a competition if his historic plan were adopted, as the towers were simply to be imitated and the wall-motif was already designed (AMA PA 71/17, April 23, 1897). He undoubtedly envisaged creation of the necessary towers by means of the same careful archeological methods applied at Oud Holland. The competition results were disappointing; only one design of the eleven submitted was judged prize-worthy. By mid-November 1897, the path for the queen's entry had been determined and the committee elected to focus its efforts on the decoration along that path, rather than either the historic line or plan. Because of the strengths of Kromhout's proposals, however, he was now invited to design the decorations along the entry path from the Frederiksplein to the palace on the Dam, traversing streets and most importantly the two main canals, the Herengracht and Keizersgracht.[15] These decorations would be paid for by the committees representing those streets and canals. The shorter portion of the entry path from the queen's arrival at the Staatsspoor Station to the Frederiksplein was to be commissioned from the architect Ed Cuypers (AMA PA 71/17, November 15, 1897).

At the meeting at which he was commissioned to decorate the royal entry route, Kromhout was also given the brief to coordinate his historic plan with the relevant neighborhood committees. A few days later, on November 17, Kromhout lectured to the *Nederlandsche Maatschappij ter bevordering van Nijverheid* (Dutch Society for the Promotion of Industry), a talk that was widely reported in the newspapers and thus served as Kromhout's attempt to gather support for his plan. Kromhout first warned against decorations that imitate permanent structures and encouraged taking advantage of the water in the city. He then described in detail what one newspaper called his "historical Amsterdam" decorations, presenting his drawings of the proposed masts arrayed along the old city boundary (*AH* 21725, November 19, 1897). Kromhout explained that the plan marked the extent of the city in 1578, the year that Amsterdam had aligned itself with the House of Orange. By tracing the line of the city wall of that period, which is depicted on the 1544 map by Cornelis Antonisz, "the first alliance between Amsterdam and Orange can be included symbolically in our decorations." His aim was to recall a memorable moment in the history of Amsterdam and Orange by means of decorations, "to draw a historical thread" (Kromhout 1897: 396). According to one account of his lecture, Kromhout noted that this memory would not be created through a depiction of what stood there before (*afbeelding van het vroeger bestaande*), but rather through a great chain created by the separated but linked masts connected visually by their repeated coats of arms, flags, pennants, and cords (*TNM* 1897: 555). Kromhout had moved in the previous months from his original notion of recreating the missing towers and gates as they had been (*gelijk zij waren*); he now adamantly rejected reconstruction of what stood before (*het vroeger bestaande*). Kromhout's mode of communication was to be through signage, not through the taxidermy of historic forms. The references on the masts to the eleven provinces came from the realization that the investiture was not a specifically Amsterdam celebration, but a Dutch one and thus should carry a national character (*TNM* 1897: 555). As we have seen, he intended the derivation of the decorative forms from maritime rigging to carry a national symbolism.

Given that Kromhout's historical plan was not executed, it is safe to assume that he was not successful in gaining the cooperation of the necessary neighborhood committees. The groups were notoriously divisive; committees repeatedly formed and then disbanded, often over personal disputes (Van Hulzen 1901: 15). Neighborhoods were keenly competitive with each other and Kromhout's united plan interfered with the expression of local pride. The historic nature of his proposal may itself have been an impediment. While the "historic plan" of decoration had been viewed favorably by the members of the general decorative committee, most of whom lived on the main canals as part of Amsterdam's elite, foregrounding Amsterdam's turn to the side of the House of Orange could be viewed by others as partisan. One reaction against Kromhout's plan was voiced by the art critic and historian Jan Kalff, who was otherwise sympathetic to the modernity of Kromhout's design method. As a Catholic, he raised objections to the plan because of its painful associations with those exiled at the time of Amsterdam's turn to the Protestant position. Recalling the refusal of the prominent Catholic leader and "full-blood Amsterdammer" Alberdingk Thijm to condone Catholic participation in the tercentennial celebrations of the Reformation in 1878, Kalff protested the anti-Catholic tenor of Kromhout's "symbolic carpentry" (Kalff 1897a: 371, 1897b: 397). Others, sensing the potential for controversy, advised against a "historical decoration" as preposterous because it lacked the required harmony for such an occasion (Lambeek 1897: 10) Given these responses, it is indeed possible that Kromhout's plan if executed would have constituted a reminder of splits in Dutch society at precisely the time when the new queen was being promoted as a conciliatory symbol among the various doctrinal factions of Dutch society.

The decorations of 1898

By December 13, 1897 Kromhout had designed new decorations for the entry path. Like those he developed for the historic plan, these emphasized the length of the canals with repeated wooden constructions. Masts placed at regular intervals leaned over the water at a 45 degree angle from either side of the canals along which the queen would ride. They carried flags with the Dutch national colors held by orange cords and shields varying with the arms of Amsterdam and the royal family. Linking the masts were long lines of colorful lanterns in the Dutch tri-colors hanging over the water, reflected day and especially at night (see Plate 8b). On bridges, Kromhout continued the motif of angled masts; on the bridge over the Singel on the Raadhuisstraat, the spaces between masts were filled with emblematic paintings representing Commerce and Shipping, Transportation and Industry (Figure 8.8). Since no decorations were placed on the streets flanking the canals, traffic was unimpeded and the

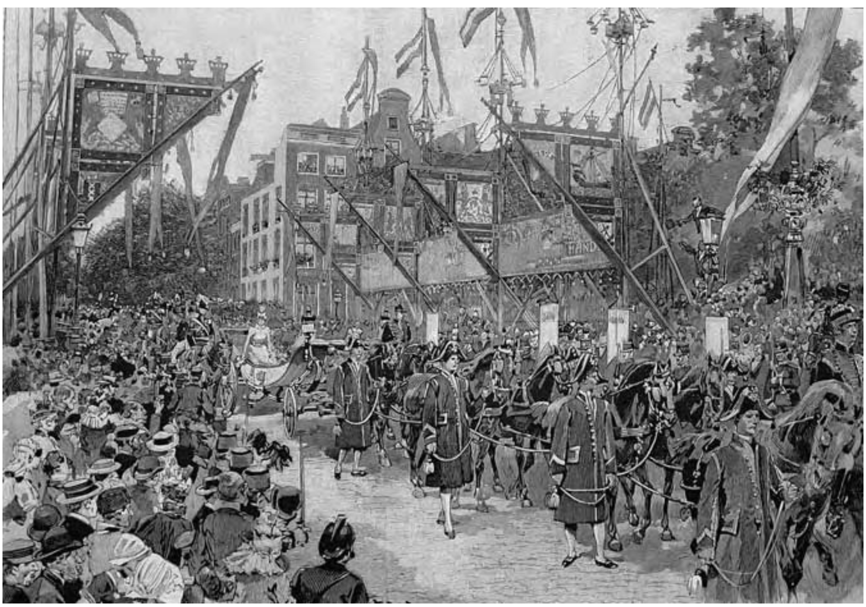

Figure 8.8 Decorations on Raadhuisstraat bridge, 1898. From *L'Illustration* 56, 2898: 168, September 10, 1898.

views onto the decorations were unencumbered. Above the Leidsestraat, one of the streets of the entry path, Kromhout raised nets of geometric stars that could be illuminated at night. On another, the Utrechtsestraat, Kromhout erected a series of crossed masts. Uncompromisingly straight and geometrical, the overhangs above the street formed by the crossed masts carried colorful banners of provincial arms hanging perpendicular; the cog ship of the Amsterdam seal painted on wood rose in the highest triangle; at the apex a radiating form like a steering wheel played off the Dutch historic mastery of the seas and the Dutch word *raad*—the council of governance (Figure 8.9). Kromhout's conventional symbols in the form of flags and heraldic arms were accessible to the public, unlike allegorical figures previously favored by P.J.C. Cuypers, among others. Altogether, the entry path became a unified and monumental whole extending a colorful line through the city, in contrast to the paths punctuated by occasional monumental decorations of earlier celebrations. It was a Semperian solution at the scale of the city: the temporary interjection of festive color and form left the city's body visible and untampered. Similarly, within each decoration, materials and construction were clearly enunciated: the

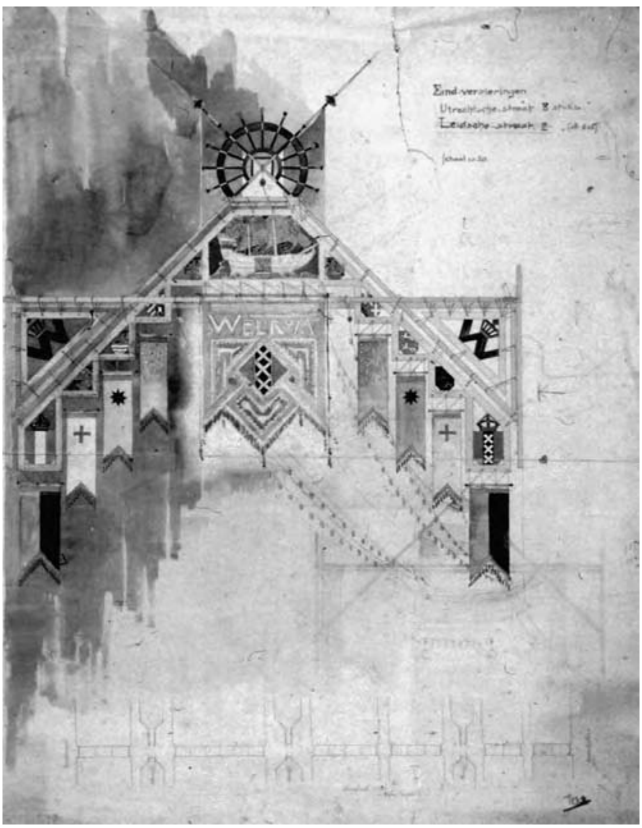

Figure 8.9 Willem Kromhout, Sketch for Utrechtsestraat, 1898. From the Kromhout Archive, with kind permission of the Netherlands Architecture Institute.

strings holding the pennants wound decoratively through the holes bored in the wooden laths that held them. From string, to cloth, to wood, to canal, to streetscape, each element of the decoration was delineated clearly.

In the days proceeding and following the investiture, the canals along the entry path swarmed with people looking at the decorations. The unconventional designs were praised in the press, though the plain materials and advanced forms were found odd by some commentators. The *Algemeen Handelsblad* pronounced Kromhout's decorations some of the most beautiful in the city. One author wrote about "the strange decorations, palisades of raw wood, yet painted so stylishly with soft colors and fraught with modern lines" that they contrasted pleasantly with the sturdy but princely merchants' houses along the canals (Van Hulzen 1901: 32). The official guide to the investiture described the "taut lines" of the arches on the Utrechtsestraat and commented on how well the repeated forms on the main canals fit their character (Balbian Verster 1898: 269).

The architectural press was more mixed in its response. After Kromhout's November lecture, doubts had been expressed in the conservative journal *De Opmerker* about the ability of the "*nieuwe kunst*" (new art) to succeed in decoration; Jan Springer was promoted as the experienced man to supervise decoration of the whole city, although it was acknowledged that he was viewed by the younger generation as "old school" (*DO* 1897, 32/48: 384). *De Opmerker* ridiculed the theoretical discussions being carried out about urban decorations, in particular the rational approach of Kromhout and others who rejected the entire legacy of triumphal arches made of painted canvas on wooden scaffolding, the fake architecture, quasi-antique forms, and meaningless allegories. Once Kromhout's designs were known, *De Opmerker* made it clear that the decision of the committee to experiment with a young practitioner of the "new art" such as Kromhout had indeed been a mistake when an experienced decorator such as Springer was available (*DO* 1898, 33/2: 9–10). The journal was unconvinced that the continuous unified and harmonious decoration all along the entry path was preferable to giving numerous architects the opportunity to design (*DO* 1898, 33/5: 36). Once Kromhout's decorations were up, *De Opmerker* remained completely blind to their merits and ridiculed their abstract geometries and unconventional heraldic forms. With terms like "Assyrian" and "primitive," the criticism was the typical reaction of the old guard to the "new art," which it attacked for its rationalism—code for Cuyper's influence in propagating Viollet-le-Duc's theory of the truthful relationship of ornament to construction. The critic of *De Opmerker* was aghast upon viewing Kromhout's new versions of heraldic motifs because Kromhout was not working according to the established rules and conventions. Kromhout had not discarded the old motifs as outmoded, but transformed them through an abstracting, geometric vision intended to reinvigorate them and re-imbue them with symbolic significance. The critic noted the irrationality of placing the decorations over the canals, rather than over the canalside street where the royal cortege would ride. The justification that these decorations were answering the general call for a design that would accentuate Amsterdam's most important spatial feature and that their position allowed for a playful reflection was overlooked (*DO* 1898, 33/36: 283). A change had taken place in the stagecraft of urban decoration, dramatically revealing the generation gap between those clinging to an outmoded theatricality of verisimilitude and those embracing an abstract play of symbols.

The newness of Kromhout's decorations was immediately recognized. In the *Bouwkundig Weekblad*, the critic found the attempt at originality fascinating (*BW* 18/38: 295–6). The designs were hailed by Joseph Cuypers as the harbinger of a renewed Dutch architecture. Cuypers associated the new ornamentation of the city by young architects who turned their backs on the imitations of permanent buildings and historical styles with the progress of history—under each monarch the Dutch had developed a new architectural expression: romanticism under Willem I, historicism under Willem III, development of techniques under the Regency, and the investiture of Wilhemina similarly augured a new architecture (Cuypers 1898). A fellow member with Kromhout of the society *Architectura et Amicitia*, the architectural club of the younger generation, Cuypers had thought that the best way to respond to the character of the city was to apply decoration sparingly, modestly, and soberly, achieving harmony only with tricolor flags throughout and the simple illumination of towers, bridges, and public buildings (Cuypers 1897: 52). After the coronation, he expressed contemporary architectural thinking in clear terms. Since festive decorations are by nature temporary because they are intended to give expression to the strong feelings of joy felt upon a particular occasion, "All intrinsic material monumentality in their execution is ruled out," he pronounced authoritatively. "Even the appearance of any resemblance with permanent architecture must be avoided" (Cuypers 1897: 151). But by this time, even the conservative critic of *De Opmerker* largely agreed with this position. He concurred that decorations should give the impression of being temporary and should not be too massive or too close an imitation of monumental buildings: it would be a blunder to paint gates as if they were brick or hewn stone. Nonetheless, he found the sober lines of the gate erected by the Dutch army to be one of the best (*DO* 1898, 33/37: 290). Unsurprisingly, the greatest concentration of such old fashioned triumphal arches was found in the workers' districts in the older city. Alongside the generation gap within the architectural world, a gap had arisen between the architects and the public. Yet, there was no question that Kromhout had applied a new approach to urban decoration; it was acknowledged as the first time that the *nieuwe kunst* had been applied to urban decoration, and the first time that there was a break with the tradition of concentrating decoration on a few main points in the city (*DO* 1901, 36/4: 66; 11: 85), Instead, Kromhout had created a continuous *via triumphalis* in color and form.

In 1901, on the occasion of the queen's wedding, Kromhout was again asked to design the path for a royal entry through Amsterdam. This time his designs came even closer to fulfilling the promise of his 1897 proposal with high masts placed directly in the middle of the canals (Figure 8.10). By then, his earlier decorations had had an effect. The heavy gates and massive triumphal arches that had been so omnipresent throughout Amsterdam in 1887 and still found a place in 1898 had given place to light and airy scaffolding made of unhidden masts and laths, tied by cords and hung with waving flags and pennants. Only a few points in the city still put up the old fashioned constructs. One modernist observer wrote triumphantly, "The streets and canals were all adorned more according to the modern spirit" (Van der Pek 1901: 5). The new decorations were viewed as logically reasoned, achieving a maximum of effect with a minimum of means, in contrast with the "nonsensical pseudo-monumentalism" of faked columns and cornices made of paper and linen (Stuijt 1901: 75).

The decorations of 1898 and 1901 were later remembered as one of most successful episodes in Kromhout's career. In 1917, Jan Kalff began his laudatory

Figure 8.10 Keizersgracht, Decorations for the queen's wedding, 1901. Postcard. From the author's collection.

overview of Kromhout's work with a long and eloquent paean to the decorations, which he felt showed Kromhout at his best (Kalff 1917: 89–91). An apologist for the Amsterdam School, W. Retera praised the decorations as joyful (Retera 1926). In the 1930s, the functionalist architect Maaskant found in Kromhout's work an anticipation of his own call for "a light and unpretentious decoration, a fragile festive curtain" (Maaskant 1937: 11–13). Kromhout's decoration of the canals was singled out as an model, an independent functional element, appropriately separated from the surrounding buildings, yet unifying the disparate parts of the city fabric and admired for their time as the height of "fantasy, wonder, and craftsmanship" (Mieras 1948: 278).[16]

The surprising playfulness and freshness of Kromhout's urban decoration appeared indicative of a new era. The investiture promised a more enlightened monarchy after the indelicacies of the previous king and promoted the virginal Wilhelmina as a unifying symbol rising above contemporary partisan strife (Sas 1991). The festival air of celebration could be tapped by liberal politicians to encourage a popular warmth that, at least for many Catholics, muted memories of historical and recent sectarian conflict while still playing up to conservative Orangist patriots for whom the seventeenth century represented the origins of the nation. Only the socialists objected to the cost of the splendid trappings, but even they felt that it was a waste of energy to protest against the pleasure people would take in the festivities: even a socialist could with equanimity go out and view the illuminated decorations (Tak 1898: 121).

History, symbol, and the rejection of illusion and imitation

In 1898 Kromhout's colorful and imaginative, abstract and symbolic decorations contrasted dramatically with the neighborhood decorations which continued in the familiar tradition of constructing fake buildings. Popular newspaper accounts that neglected to mention the canal decorations by Kromhout often praised the castellated "old Amsterdam gate" on the Rapenburgerstraat, complete with costumed guards, the very kind of exercise Kromhout had advised the neighborhood against (Figure 8.11). *Collier's Weekly* reported that the gate was "as fine a structural imitation as Sir Henry Irving ever put on the Lyceum stage" and that it transported one two centuries into the past, unaware that such sentiments now represented reactions considered long outmoded (Gibbon 1898: 5). In the Kattenburger district, an ensemble of triumphal arches represented the history of the House of Orange with paintings and busts of *stadhouders*, sea heroes, and their arms, not unlike those erected in 1874. Whereas thirty years before, the neighborhood decorations were in harmony with the official one, there was now a wide gulf.

Unlike Berlage, Kromhout wrote no lengthy treatise on urban ornament and the accounts of his two lectures on the topic do not convey any specific engagement with Semperian theory. The decorations themselves, however, belie the desire of his generation to shift from the enactment of history through

Figure 8.11 Markenplein, "Old Amsterdam gate" on the Rapenburgerstraat, 1898. B. Groote, photographer. With kind permission of the Dutch Royal Archives.

antiquarian imitation to the forging of a representational language freed from past forms to work abstractly and symbolically. In other words, architecture's representational means lay in the capacity of its form, material, and construction to convey ideas symbolically. In its rejection of allegory in favor of symbol, of literal representation for abstraction, this movement certainly had affinities to the Semperian position (Hvattum 2004: 105).

Kromhout ends his lecture "Tout à l'égout" with the prediction that historians in several hundred years would look back to the end of the nineteenth century as the origin of their architectural forms. Imbued with the historical consciousness of his era, his call for change was itself embedded within a historical frame. His decorations rejected historical styles, imitation of masonry construction, and the creation of conventional decorative types such as the triumphal arch. They embraced visible construction and innovative forms; they created monumentality and expressed the spatial character of the city. All of these characteristics endeared them to later modernists. But they were also embedded in a historical consciousness expressed through their symbolic references to the glorious period of Dutch history's seventeenth century. Had they followed the path Kromhout intended, along the boundary between the medieval and Renaissance city, Kromhout's continuing use of historical thinking would have been even more evident. Kromhout's unexecuted historic plan was meant to be a temporary trace evoking a momentous turn in Amsterdam's history. It would have made history, as marked on the space of Amsterdam, evident to contemporary observers. As it was, the executed decorations along the entry path announced, traced, and then recalled a movement through the city that took place at a particular time, temporary markers of movement in time through space. They shifted the "way in which history is envisioned as being available to the present" (Hvattum 2004: 173).

Notes

1 A useful review of decorations in Amsterdam during the Batavian Republic, the Napoleonic occupation, and the first half of the nineteenth century appears in Tanio 1901: 3–4.

2 One of the Belgian arches was sold to the zoo; the other two were redecorated and placed on the Dam and Botermarkt. For the proceedings of the organizing committee, see AMA, PA 32 *Commissie tot regeling er feestviering bij het 25-jarig regeringsjubileum van Koning Willem III, 1873–7*; for a summary, see Winkel-van Hall 1974.

3 Descriptions of neighborhood decorations are given in Høfdijk 1875: 6. Other descriptions can be found in the *AC* May 12, 1874; *DT* May 12, 1874; and *AH* May 12–13, 1874.

4 For the archives of the Executive Committee organizing the festivities, see AMA PA 55 (*Uitvoerend Comité voor de Aprilfeesten ter gelegenheid van de 70e verjaardag van Koning Willem III, 1887*). Socialists in particular refused to participate in any celebration of the monarchy. The timing of the festivities was also during a period of tension, only months after police had shot at workers during the *Palingoproer* of July 1886. The meaning of the decorations and the conflict among workers between the Orangists and socialists falls outside the purview of this chapter.

5 The committee's report mentions 234 committees, but some of those were disbanded (*Geïllustreerde Feestgids* 1887: 8–13).

6 Undated clipping from "Verslag over de Aprilfeesten 1887," *De Tijd* in a scrapbook compiled by Uitvoerend Comité voor de Aprilfeesten, AMA E123.

7 Gosschalk's ship was given first prize by a jury, of which he was chair.

8 Indeed the title of the article refers to *feesttooi* (festive finery); another common term at the time for urban decorations was *feestdosch* (festive attire).

9 On the importance of the picturesque or monumental in the Dutch debate on national architecture in 1880s, see Woud 1997: 124.

10 Although Kromhout won a competition for the design of the exhibition in 1894, the organizing committee appointed E. Bremen as architect. Bremen developed the general scheme and sketched a number of the main buildings. Kromhout was taken on to develop the designs for individual buildings within the scheme laid out by Bremen. There was some conflict over who should be given credit, with official publications giving it to Bremen. Previous examples of model cities were Old London (1884), Old Edinburgh (1886), Old Manchester and Salford Village at the Manchester Royal Jubilee Exhibition in England (1887), the Bastille (1889), Old Vienna (1892), Old Antwerp (1894).

11 Buildings were reproduced from Nijmegen, Zaltbommel, Enkhuizen, Oudewater, Alkmaar, Amsterdam, Poeldijk, Middleburg, Dordrecht, Veere, Haarlem, Zwolle, Utrecht, Heemstede.

12 This point of view was also expressed by the Dutch Renaissance architect A.W. Weissman, *Men voelt nu maar al te zeer, dat wat men ziet, de vrucht is van een ontwikkeld*

compiliatievermogen, dat slects wist na te bootsen (Weissman 1895: 192). He felt the reproduction of part of a particular city in a particular time period would have been more appropriate to show people now how their forefathers lived and pointed to the inconsistencies in interior design, food, costumes (Weissman 1895: 233).

13 By 1898, the style rooms composed from the Suasso collection at the newly opened neo-Renaissance Stedelijk Museum were considered laughable.

14 Two years later saw the creation of Oud-Dordt for the *Dordrechtsche Tentoonstelling*, which included only Dordrecht buildings that had been demolished. The intention was to emphasize the aesthetic over the historic in order to make it a "characteristically Dordrecht, picturesque corner."

> *Die zucht om op een tentoonstelling zoo'n oud stadje te hebben is toch wel iets eigenaardigs. Er spreekt onvoldaanheid uit met onze rechtlijnige straten [. . .] Uit architectonisch oogpunt zou Oud-Dordt een uitgezochte plaats wezen voor open-lucht colleges over schoone bouwkunst.*
>
> (Balen 1897: 5)

At the ENTOS exhibition of 1913, an Oud Amsterdam was erected by a German carnival organizer without any participation of architects.

15 The full path of the route was Weesperpoort station, Sarphatistraat, Hoogesluis, Frederiksplein, Utrechtsestraat, Herengracht, Leidsestraat, Keizersgracht, Raadhuisstraat, Dam.

16 A descriptive comparison of the 1898 and 1901 decorations indicates that the author was unfamiliar with those from 1898, believing that the canals were decorated only in 1901 (*BW* 1937: 14–15).

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Archival sources

AMA	Amsterdam Municipal Archives
RHA	Royal House Archives
NAi	Netherlands Architecture Institute

Periodicals and journals

AC	*Amsterdamsche Courant*
AH	*Algemeen Handelsblad*
BW	*Bouwkundig Weekblad*
DK	*De Kunstwereld*
DO	*De Opmerker*
DT	*De Tijd*
Kroniek	*De Kroniek, een algemeen weekblad*
TNM	*Tijdschrift der Nederlandsche Maatschappij ter bevordering van Nijverheid*

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9

Sound, light, and the mystique of space

Paris 1937

Robert Weddle

In August 1937, the French magazine of style *Plaisir de France* published a special issue devoted to the international exposition that had captivated the public throughout that summer. The issue was organized into a number of narrative promenades, each describing a different part of the exposition. In one of these episodes, a "Promenade Nocturne," readers shared vicariously in the special delights of a nighttime visit, on which they accompanied Harrold and Anny, two fictional tourists from Wales (Barotte 1937). The young couple arrived at the Bourget airport around six p.m., after a cross-channel flight. Within an hour they had checked in at the Ritz, then immediately plunged into the experience of the fair, whose pavilions and attractions lined the monumental cross-axis of the Trocadéro and the Champs de Mars, and stretched along the Seine from the Pont Alexandre III to the Pont de Grenelle. By ten p.m. Harrold and Anny had settled into the riverfront Restaurant du Roi George, their attention divided between the authentic French meal they were served and the spectacle on the Seine, as darkness fell and one-by-one the bridges and pavilions lining the river were illuminated by brilliant and colorful light.

After dinner, the couple's nocturnal promenade continued, but not before Anny was invited to the front of the dining room to operate the famous Theatre d'Eau. Each evening, we are told, one of the most beautiful of the restaurant's patrons was privileged to manipulate the keyboard-like console, which set in motion and orchestrated the stunning performance of fountains, light, and sound on the river outside. After this unexpected treat, our Welsh tourists proceeded to the terrace of the British pavilion, farther down the Seine, to witness one of the eighteen grand *Fêtes de la Lumière* [Festivals of Light] specially commissioned for the fair (Figure 9.1). On this August evening, the music of Raymond Loucheur and the poetry of Fernand Gregh—along with fireworks, smoke, and hundreds of pumps and projecting lamps—combined in a visual and aural narrative evoking a journey along the Seine "from its source to the sea" (Barotte 1937: 17–18).

Figure 9.1 *Fête de la Lumière* performance on the Seine. Postcard published in 1937 by H. Chipault. Larry Zim World's Fair Collection, Archives Center, National Museum of American History, Behring Center, Smithsonian Institution.

The recounting of Harrold and Anny's adventure was part of a concerted media campaign to promote the exposition and encourage tourism (Berthet 1987: 472–7; Peer 1998: 27–33). But the fascination it conveys for the nightly illuminations and water shows was authentic and widespread, and reported by numerous visitors and commentators. The official summaries filed by the fair's organizers also expressed pride in the success of this particular aspect of the fair, and argued that the impressive visual and sensual effects of the sound, water, and light displays were the most effective demonstration of the fair's intent, as expressed in its official title: *L'Exposition Internationale des Arts et Techniques dans la Vie Moderne*. The nocturnal displays borrowed from baroque traditions in which plays of water, light, and fireworks were infused with musical and spoken-word performances to form an encompassing sensual spectacle. These traditions were modernized, however, through new technical means including up-to-date pumping, lighting, and amplification capabilities as well as advanced electrical control systems and distribution networks that allowed fairgoers to interact with the displays—sometimes literally through manipulating their effects, but always through a sense of physical immersion within the spectacle.

While celebrated as evidence of a convincing marriage of art and technique, the nightly illuminations and eruptions along the Seine were also intended to fulfill the second part of the exposition's mission: to demonstrate that the merging of art and technique could have a transformative and lasting effect on modern life. The festivals were entertainment, but they also exposed fairgoers to the power of design to create new kinds of urban experience. To this end, the shows exploited both their ephemeral nature and their technological underpinnings. Rather than illuminating static architectural monuments, electric lights gave presence and color to moving screens of water and smoke (Plate 9). Coordinated with the rhythms of amplified music and exploding fireworks, evanescent visual effects suggested a modernized and temporal urbanism worthy of the great baroque traditions that had shaped central Paris.

Conceived as early as 1929, the exposition opened in late May 1937 with only a portion of its exhibition pavilions yet completed. Political instability—including rifts within Léon Blum's Front Populaire majority and attacks on it from the right—combined with labor unrest to delay the opening and dampen the enthusiasm and size of the initial crowds. By the time the fair closed in November its promoters were relieved; admissions had drastically increased from July on, thanks in part to a surge in late-summer visitors to Paris (Pinchon 1987: 36–43). Once all of the pavilions and attractions had opened, visitors encountered some 250 acres of enclosed exhibition space mainly located in a section of the city that had become the traditional site of such fairs: the axis connecting the Champ de Mars across the Seine to the Trocadéro hill, and along the arc of the Seine running from the Ile des Cygnes in the west nearly to the Place de la Concorde in the east (Greenhalgh 1988: 15).

As the last in a series of great French international expositions, the 1937 fair is often overshadowed by its predecessors. In the past, it has been most often discussed as prelude to the imminent world war. The opposition of Albert Speer's German Pavilion and Boris Iofan's Soviet Pavilion, facing off against one another at the foot of the Trocadéro hill, seemed a stark representation of the ideological divisions threatening Europe. Architecturally, however, these pavilions shared many features, including a reliance on simplified classical details and traditional monumental formal compositions. A similarly updated classicism characterized the main French pavilion, the Palais de Chaillot of architects Carlu, Boileau, and Azéma, whose design masked the remnants of the 1878 Palais du Trocadéro and crowned the exposition site. For many observers, these stylistic sympathies seemed to indicate a generalized return to tradition, independent of political and ideological differences (Borsi 1987: 139–42). In this view, the presence at the fair of more independently minded and abstract designs, including Alvar Aalto's Finnish Pavilion and—relegated to the exposition's annex at the Porte Maillot—Le Corbusier's Pavillon des Temps Nouveaux, only serves to emphasize the more conservative nature of most of the pavilions.

If stylistic readings are de-emphasized, however, a more nuanced view emerges of the complex interactions between architecture and culture at the 1937 exposition. Bertrand Lemoine has argued that the fair, while closing an era, also heralds the "popular maturation of twentieth century modernity," in which new technologies of communication, entertainment, and advertising would play a central role (Lemoine and Rivoirard 1987: 23). Against this backdrop of technological change, the reputation of French artists and luxury industries acted as a stabilizing force, grounding the potential disruption of modernization in images of tradition and unity. American fairs of the period projected similar messages of stability and renewal in the face of national crisis, promising a future of continuing progress and prosperity (Rydell 1993: 10). Unlike its American counterparts, however, the Paris 1937 exposition avoided utopian visions of the future, instead proposing that modernization could be absorbed within existing traditions, forging a balance capable of unifying disparate groups and forms (Peer 1998: 2–3).

In this context, the 1937 Fêtes de la Lumière, along with other manifestations of festive lighting at the fair, acquire an importance that transcends their sub-architectural status. Eric Monin has described the festivals as being "mid-way between spectacle and architecture"—an assessment confirmed by the intensity and breadth of the discourse about the shows in the press (Monin 2003: 99). The contemporary fascination with the festivals, whether emphasizing technical achievement or lived experience, attests to their centrality within the system of ritualized collective representation that the fair comprised. As the anthropologist Burton Benedict has observed, such systems were at the heart of all great world's fairs, and were usually represented by a single "symbolic structure" (Benedict 1983: 13). At the Paris 1937 exposition, this role was played not by the Palais de Chaillot, or in the inherited Eiffel Tower, but in the shifting edifices of light erected nightly on the Seine.

While contemporary accounts of the fair in the popular press often assessed the design and political implications of individual pavilions, they were mostly drawn to the very issue fair organizers hoped to spotlight: the possibility of an increased involvement of art and technology in modern life. The observations of the journalist Janet Flanner, in her recurring "Letter from Paris" for *The New Yorker*, are a case in point. Writing under the pen-name Gênet, Flanner chronicled French politics and society for cultured American readers from 1925 until 1975, and was an example of the type of female foreign elites at whom the fair and its propaganda potential were at least partly targeted (Peer 1998: 29, 31). Flanner's initial response to the fair, however, was hardly of service to France's reputation abroad. Throughout the winter and spring, Flanner had tracked the political manoeuvering of the government and of opposition politicians, along with chronicling disputes over the fair's construction costs and delays that were, inevitably, associated with the political turmoil (Flanner 1937a: 50). When the fair opened in June, Flanner complained of the incomplete condition of many of its buildings while focusing her attention on the three most politically charged of them: the German, Soviet, and Italian pavilions. Her descriptions made only minimal reference to the architecture of these, however, concentrating instead on the effectiveness of their contents as political propaganda (Flanner 1937b: 53).

By August, however, Flanner had joined the numerous observers who were increasingly captivated by the exposition's nightly sound-and-light spectacles.

She celebrated the "charming, transitory aspects" of the fair, especially the "wondrous conflagrations" set off each night from the Eiffel Tower (Flanner 1937c: 38). Flanner first noted the Fêtes de la Lumière on the Seine, however, for their technical shortcomings. By late August these appear to have been worked out. The fair was finally drawing large crowds, and Flanner gave herself over to the majesty of the nightly shows:

> What's happening to the Fair's fountains is more talked of than what's happening to the *franc*. For the fountains keep mounting. Starting at low ebb, because of mechanical difficulties, they have now been brought to a height of artistic perfection which nightly rivals the occasional fountain displays at Versailles. Fountains arranged like a formal garden on the edge of the Seine, spouting water shaped like trees, curving like hedges, bursting like tinted blossoms, assuming all the outlines of garden perspective; fountains in the centre of the river, playing like geysers of liquid electric color while superb fireworks spiral and bang in the sky overhead—these are what are now making Paris's nights.
>
> (Flanner 1937d: 36)

Flanner's enthusiasm is remarkable when considered against her tendency towards objective, if not skeptical, observation. She was not alone, however, in employing the imagery of landscape architecture to describe the visual effects of the nighttime festivals. Similar in theme, if more rhapsodic in tone and propagandistic in purpose, was an essay by Louis Richard-Mounet in the popular weekly magazine *L'Illustration*:

> Art and technique communicate closely so that, during the night, a whole array of luminous, fluid, grandiose and fugitive architecture explodes magically from the river itself . . . . The Seine is thus transformed into a marvelous dream-garden of long sinuous sparkling *allées*, mysterious shaded openings, swaying vegetation, and miraculous flowers.
>
> (Richard-Mounet 1937)

Both Richard-Mounet and Flanner were attracted to ways in which electric light, fountains, and fireworks could suggest the features and spatial configurations of formal gardens. Such imagery was useful to the designers of the festivals, as they shaped visual settings for the nightly narrative themes. These ephemeral landscapes revealed themselves only to disappear in an instant, transforming the existing urban setting and the river that was its centerpiece. The *son-et-lumière* [sound and light] performances sprang from the aristocratic tradition of royal festivals, for which the baroque garden usually provided a backdrop. By appealing to similar imagery, descriptions of the 1937 displays not only became more evocative, but they were also situated within understandable spatial contexts that suggested the physical participation of fair visitors in the nightly festival.

The Fêtes de la Lumière benefited from the powerful visual presence of adjacent pavilions and monuments, as well as from the illuminations of the Eiffel Tower designed by André Granet, and Roger-Henri Expert's new Trocadéro fountains. These connections between the displays and their surroundings mirrored the collaborative nature of the spectacles themselves. Designs for the thematic visual sequences of the Fêtes were coordinated with each of the eighteen composers commissioned to provide musical accompaniment for the shows, including Arthur Honegger, Olivier Messiaen, and Darius Milhaud (Simeone 2002: 9–17). In keeping with the theme of the exposition, the complexity of the festivals also required the collaboration of teams of technicians who devised, manufactured, and installed the various mechanical components contributing to the visual and aural effects of the shows.

The collaborative process was overseen by architects Eugène Beaudouin and Marcel Lods, who conceived the shows and organized their execution. The Beaudouin and Lods partnership is best known for having produced some of the most remarkable and technologically aggressive French architecture of the interwar period, including the Cité de la Muette housing in Drancy (1930–5), the Ecole de Plein-Air in Suresnes (1934–5), and—along with Jean Prouvé—the Maison du Peuple in Clichy (1936–9). Given the singularity of these designs, the team's work for the 1937 exposition is normally seen as a marginal moment in their brief partnership. The fleeting presence of the shows, which contributed so much to their effect on viewers, has also made them difficult to assess as historical objects. Despite their ephemeral nature, however, the festivals brought together themes that were central to the Beaudouin and Lods practice, including collaborative working methods, technological sophistication, and a concern for the broader urban contexts of architectural intervention.

The Beaudouin and Lods partnership was itself an attempt to marry art and technique, as reflected in the individual interests of the two architects. In his 1976 book *Le Métier d'Architecte*, Lods insisted on the closeness of his collaboration with Beaudouin, but acknowledged a "complimentary" relationship based on "reciprocal capacities" (Lods 1976: 11). This generally meant that Beaudouin conceived the general site plan for a project, while Lods developed its details. This division of tasks was reflected in the individual work that the two architects undertook before and after their partnership. The pair met in the *atelier* of Emmanuel Pontremoli at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, and began working together in the late 1920s. While Lods spent the 1920s in the housing practice of Beaudouin's uncle, Beaudouin was busy working on competitions at the Ecole, and assisting the urbanist J.C.N. Forestier on his plan for Havana. After their partnership, Beaudouin's urban design activities continued, manifested in projects for Monaco, Marseilles, Montpellier, Toulon, Saigon, and Cape Town. Lods's post-war work, on the other hand, remained largely concerned with housing, and with the continued advancement of schemes for pre-fabrication and lightweight, assembled construction.

At the 1937 Exposition, Lods's technical leanings were manifested in his organization of the engineering and fabrication teams that developed the

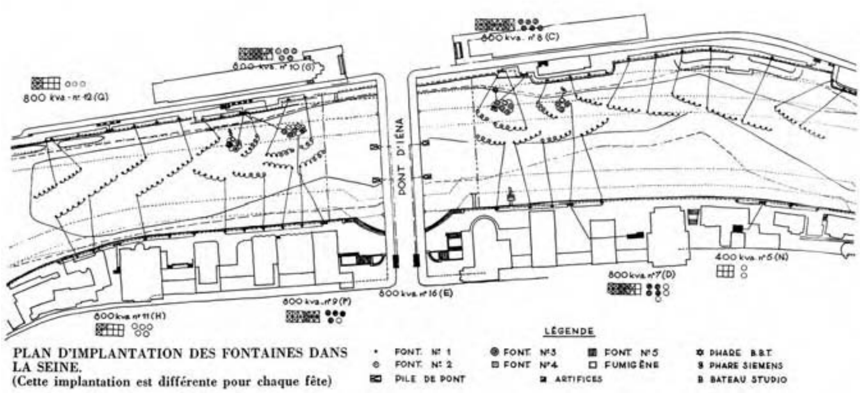

Figure 9.2 Plan showing locations of fountains on the Seine. *L'Architecture d'Aujourd'hui* August 1937. © 2007 Artists Rights Society, New York/ADAGP, Paris.

thousands of components producing the sound-and-light shows. The intricate details of these operations were carefully explained in both the popular and professional press ("Les Fêtes . . ." 1937: 58–9; Beaudouin and Lods 1937: 115–19; Chenevier 1937: n.p.; Labbé 1937a: 422–8). While most of the necessary components had been employed before, especially at the two previous interwar expositions in 1925 and 1931, the scale of the 1937 shows was unique (Morton 2000: 67–9; Daufresne 2001: 21–9). The Seine offered a superb visual setting for the shows, while it also provided an easy source of pumpable water (Figure 9.2). For the nightly light and water festivals, 174 floating fountains of different types were arranged along the river on either side of the Pont d'Iéna, attached to the river bed by hinged tripods. The use of floating fountains was not new, but they had never been placed in a navigable waterway. In order to keep the river open, therefore, Lods devised a system whereby the floats supporting the fountains could be filled with water, sinking the entire device to the bottom of the river, then pumped empty again and re-floated prior to each performance ("Les Fêtes . . ." 1937: 58). Once raised to the surface, the floating fountains could be positioned in various configurations according to the specific program scheduled for that particular evening.

Heavier and more sensitive equipment was housed within and on top of non-submersible pontoons attached to the piers of the bridge and to the *quais* along the river. The pontoons supported pumps and fountains, projector lamps of various colors, transformers, loudspeakers, smoke machines, and ventilating fans. Water-sensitive equipment was housed within the shell of each pontoon, and could be accessed via ladders (Beaudouin and Lods 1937: 115–19). The floating pontoons also provided means of connection to additional stations from which fireworks were launched. By collecting heavier, non-submersible equipment within these fixed pontoons, the use of smaller submersible water-fountains was made more feasible; together, the two types of systems allowed flexible designs in response to the varying thematic programs. The systems were refined through a series of tests conducted by Beaudouin and Lods and their team on the Seine at Viry-Chatillon, beginning more than a year prior to the opening of the exposition (Beaudouin 1936) (Figure 9.3). The testing program was especially important for coordinating visual effects with electrically reproduced music. The composers commissioned to provide musical accompaniment for the festivals were each provided with a detailed plan describing the organization and specific timings of lighting and water effects for a given thematic performance (Simeone 2002: 14–15). The completed compositions were recorded on 78 rpm discs and broadcast during the festivals using a variety of loudspeaker systems and positions. The sound was thus made to emanate directly from the Seine, by way of speakers located alongside the fountains and other effects floating in the river. Sound also, however, surrounded the spectators in a variety of ways, coming from speakers hung in trees and mounted on exposition pavilions, from the Eiffel Tower and, in certain cases, from airplanes passing overhead (Beaudouin and Lods 1937: 119; Monin 2003: 108–9). The simultaneous employment of these distinct networks of sound presented difficulties, since the ability to coordinate between networks and to achieve

Figure 9.3 Testing for the Fêtes de la Lumière at Viry-Châtillon. Postcard published in 1937 by H. Chipault. Larry Zim World's Fair Collection, Archives Center, National Museum of American History, Behring Center, Smithsonian Institution.

desired volumes and tonal effects varied according to the particular weather conditions on a given evening ("Les Illuminations . . ." 1937: 52).

All of these devices—amplification and speaker systems, fountains, light projectors, smoke devices, and fireworks—were powered by specially installed electrical networks and linked via underwater cables to a centralized floating studio. Anchored along the Quai Branly, just east of the Eiffel Tower and the Belgian Pavilion, this control vessel was fabricated by Jean Prouvé, who had worked with Beaudouin and Lods on a number of their projects, and who was becoming increasingly involved in their designs (Sulzer 2000: 60–3, 116–25, 186–209; Monin 2003: 113–14). From the floating studio, Eugène Beaudouin personally controlled the intricate nightly shows by means of a console linked to electric valves and switches governing each of the hundreds of effects. At a smaller control panel next to Beaudouin, the composer of a given evening's musical program could adjust relative volumes and reverberation times for the various networks of loudspeakers. Despite pre-determined plans and strict coordination between the carefully devised effects and recorded music, the artistic collaboration between composer and architect-urbanist was symbolized by their joint live "performances" of the festivals.

Centralized control from the floating studio was in fact an integral part of the Beaudouin and Lods scheme since its inception. The pair had been granted the commission after winning a 1935 competition seeking designs for "Fêtes des eaux et de la lumière" at the upcoming exposition (Udovicki 1987: 63–4; Monin 2003: 99–101). The designers called their scheme "Comète," illustrating it with plans and a striking rendered aerial view, as well as with detailed written explanations (Figure 9.4). Presenting the six finalists for the competition in April 1935, editors of the journal *La Construction Moderne* paraphrased Beaudouin's description, praising both the practicality and the fantasy inherent in the scheme:

> Through the play of artificial clouds, the illumination of the current, the simultaneous play of different water themes and the variety of their coloration, the most diverse effects may be obtained. Music will accompany this visual enchantment. This beautiful symphony will be placed under the direction of a single *Chef d'orchestre* who, from his pulpit, will command the water, light, aircraft, and orchestra. A bold concept, but apparently quite realizable.
>
> ("Exposition Internationale . . ." 1935: 602)

When it ultimately proved impossible to perform the accompanying music live, the electrically recorded and amplified substitute became yet another compositional element in the designer's palette.

The direction of the Fêtes de la Lumière from the floating studio emphasized not only the complexity of the visual and aural compositions animating the Seine, but also the central role of the designer in conceiving and commanding the displays. Beyond the trick of sinking and raising the floating water jets to

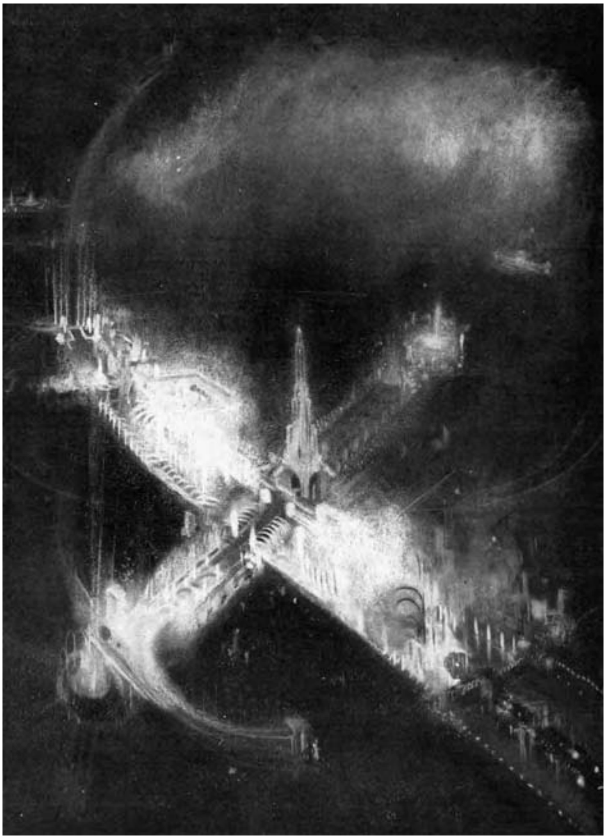

Figure 9.4
Beaudouin and Lods competition entry for Seine illuminations at the Paris 1937 Exposition. Rendering by Eugène Beaudouin. *L'Architecture d'Aujourd'hui* March 1935.

accommodate river traffic, it was the scale and variability of the shows that was of most interest to commentators. Electric light, but also electric controls, allowed the displays to respond to the touch of a finger. As we have seen, the modern son-et-lumière performance was understood as part of a tradition beginning in Rome and passing through Versailles. But the unwieldy artifice of flares and fireworks and gravity-fed fountains at Versailles had given way—thanks to new technologies—to a more supple and immediate means of manipulating visual experience. For Edmond Labbé, the General Commissioner of the 1937 Exposition, the networks of cables and piping and switching equipment fought against the immobility of the traditional spectacle, allowing the spontaneous manipulation of the display from a distance and in an instant (Labbé 1937a: 427). The transformability of the new festival satisfied the modern taste for constant and immediate renewal.

Despite the scripted and rehearsed nature of the nightly Fêtes de la Lumière, the presence of architect and composer at the floating studio's consoles suggested the spontaneous control of technological spectacle that, Labbé argued, was a primary theme of the exposition. Of even greater importance was the democratization and popularization of the artistic-technological synthesis claimed for the exposition. Consequently, at the Théatre d'Eau—devised and installed by Beaudouin and Lods upriver from the site of the nightly festivals—visitors to the fair were invited to try their hand at orchestrating their own water and light shows. As described in the fictional "Promenade Nocturne" recounted by René Barotte in *Plaisir de France*, the fountains arrayed across the Seine from the Restaurant du Roi George were controlled by a keyboard-like device that could be "played" with only minimal instruction (Figure 9.5):

> The young lady had only just placed her fingers on the keys and begun sketching out the first symphonic notes when the world's sweetest music was heard. The chords seemed to come not from the piano, but from the Seine itself, from the very heart of the waters. And suddenly the river sprouted bundles of colors—reds, oranges, blues, greens and pinks—which climbed in the sky, now softly, now more precisely, according to the pressure applied to the keys.
>
> (Barotte 1937: 17)

Figure 9.5
Le Piano Magique dans le restaurant de luxe. Controlling the Théatre d'Eau from the console in the Restaurant du Roi George. Illustration by Georges Hamel, *L'Illustration*, May 29, 1937. Courtesy L'Illustration Multimédia.

Figure 9.6 Théatre d'Eau. Postcard published in 1937 by H. Chipault. Larry Zim World's Fair Collection, Archives Center, National Museum of American History, Behring Center, Smithsonian Institution.

The keyboard humanized the act of technological control, translating the sensitive touch of the beautiful tourist into electrical signals that passed through a single submerged cable containing 500 individual conductors. At its other end, three floating pontoons were outfitted with pumps totaling 4,800 horsepower, which shot water through 2,200 nozzles to heights reaching 60 meters (Figure 9.6). The jets were lit by 400 projectors, while 400 more illuminated the ramped surface of water sprayed in front of the pontoons in order to obscure views of the equipment (Beaudouin and Lods 1937: 59; Chenevier 1937: n.p.).

The electrical and mechanical devices employed by Lods and his team had been developed over several decades—a period that saw the emergence of "illuminating engineering" as a distinct field with an increasingly powerful influence on the visual landscape. In France as elsewhere, advances in the design and engineering of lighting systems had been closely connected with the great international expositions. Edison's demonstrations of his incandescent lamp at the Paris 1881 *Exposition Internationale d'Electricité* were followed at the *Exposition Universelle* of 1889 by the use of more than 11,000 incandescent and arc lamps (Barraqué 1987: 404). Chicago's World's Columbian Exposition in 1893, however, was the first to feature comprehensive electric lighting of buildings and public spaces, employing some 90,000 lamps and helping to calm public apprehensions about the safety of electricity (Adams 1995: 49).

Along with providing sites for the demonstration of new lighting products and techniques, expositions also helped to forge professional alliances between illumination engineers, lighting manufacturers, and architects. The Paris *Exposition Internationale des Arts Décoratifs et Industriels Modernes* in 1925 coincided with the formation that same year of the *Société pour le Perfectionnement de l'Eclairage*, funded by French industry and led by graduates of the new lighting program at the Ecole Supérieure d'Electricité (Barraque 1987: 408). At the 1925 exposition, lighting fixtures were displayed as art objects in their own right, their designs combining Art Deco styling with increasingly subtle attention to functionality in response to the scientific and mathematical investigations of lighting behavior being undertaken by engineers (Duncan 1986: 23). The photometric studies of lighting designers such as Jean Dourgnon and André Salomon were increasingly connected to the aesthetic concerns of modernist architects. These connections were formalized through mutual membership in professional organizations such as the Association des Ingénieurs de l'Eclairage—whose members included the architects Rob Mallet-Stevens and René Herbst—and the Union des Artistes Modernes, to which both Dourgnon and Salomon belonged (Barraqué 1987: 408).

The question of whether lighting design should be understood as science or as art was of great interest to lighting professionals throughout the 1920s and 1930s, and the 1937 exposition provided the perfect venue for the continuing debate. Mallet-Stevens's *Pavillon de l'Electricité et de la Lumière*—lit by André Salomon and housing Raoul Dufy's gigantic fresco *La Fée Electricité*—hosted regular meetings of lighting designers who celebrated the fusion of art and technique inherent in their work (ibid.: 404). The self-conscious pursuit of this theme is typical of the propaganda surrounding the fair, but also reveals the persistence of concerns about the role of electric lighting in the modernizing city. Early experiments with electric urban lighting in the 1880s, including American arc-light towers, had aimed to replace the variations and unpredictability of gaslight with consistent, comprehensive, and powerful lighting of the entire urban space (Schivelbusch 1988: 124–7). As electric lighting proliferated, however, many critics denounced it as harsh, harmful to the eyes, and invasive.

Critics also noted the origins of street lighting as a means of surveillance. Opposed to this "lighting of order," according to Wolfgang Schivelbusch, was the "lighting of festivity" manifested in fireworks and public celebrations (ibid.: 137–8). Electrification brought an intensification of both these aspects of public lighting, allowing a more comprehensive visual control of nocturnal space but also extending festive lighting techniques to the worlds of commerce, advertising, entertainment, and mass spectacle (Mosser 2003: 33). In the American metropolis of the 1920s, street lighting became but one ingredient in an increasingly chaotic and competitive visual landscape that also included luminous skyscrapers and electric signs. This "electrified cityscape," in the analysis of David Nye, constituted an unintended but powerful manifestation of the tendency for American technological advances to become absorbed into a collectivized experience of the sublime (Nye 1994: 43, 173–98). For Nye, it was with the expositions of the 1930s that this experience was constructed and represented in the most synthetic and intentional way (ibid.: 198).

By the time of the 1937 Fêtes de la Lumière, electric illumination was already widespread, its experience was an increasingly ordinary component of urban experience, and its employment in expositions and festivals was expected. On the one hand, the 1937 shows responded to this context by upping the ante—marshalling a wider range of technological components in more complex ways in order to, in David Nye's phrase, "find new ways to astonish visitors" (ibid.: 200). On the other hand, the Fêtes de la Lumière convey a desire to maintain balance in the art-technique equation. Beaudouin's conceptualization and performance of the festivals argued for the ability of artistic vision and academic compositional training to ground the potential chaos of new technologies in aesthetic traditions. Just as Europeans saw the American skyscraper, during the same period, as having sacrificed its monumental power in the name of competitive proliferation, the crude strength of electric lighting was seen as demanding humanization and organization (Descamps 1931: 11–32). The skills of the architect could be used to recover the spirit of the earliest festivals, to extract from electrical technologies the allure and romance of the gaslight and the open flame.

The scale, visual power, and technical virtuosity of the Beaudouin and Lods festivals broke new ground and presented compelling evidence that the claims made by the exposition's title were valid: that contemporary art and advanced technique were indeed on the eve of a marriage rich with potential for modern life. The involvement of academically trained architects in the design of festivals and other ephemera was, of course, inscribed in a long tradition. For Beaudouin, however, the 1937 festivals were not just entertainments on a grand scale, but also held the potential for a newly invigorated urbanism, and for a more intensive role for architects within a practice of urbanism. Beaudouin's writings throughout the 1930s called for new forms of urban composition appropriate to the modern city, and his work on the 1937 Fêtes must ultimately be seen in the context of this advocacy.

Five years before the exposition, and three years prior to their preparation of the "Comète" competition scheme, Beaudouin and Lods had entered another competition that offered the potential for a much deeper involvement in the eventual planning of the 1937 fair. In January of 1932, the Comité d'Etudes pour l'Exposition Internationale d'Art Moderne de 1937 à Paris launched an ideas competition for the location and general planning strategy for the exposition. The Beaudouin and Lods project emerged as one of four finalists from among seventy-eight entries. Like the vast majority of the submitted projects, their scheme was located not in central Paris but on its periphery ("Le Concours . . ." 1932: 144–61). The proposal, given the title "Acropole 37," took advantage of the Mont Valérien fort, located west of the Bois de Boulogne between the suburbs of Suresnes and Nanterre. The fort was the largest of seventeen built between 1840 and 1845 as part of Adolphe Thiers' system of peripheral defenses, which had been decommissioned in 1919 (Cohen and Lortie 1991: 29–33, 117–20). Its hilltop location afforded views of the park and the city beyond, and its powerful forms offered an anchor around which the essential spaces for the exposition could be terraced: arrangements of foreign and national pavilions, access roads and an airstrip, and a series of grand ceremonial plazas descending to the Seine (Figure 9.7).

The suburban orientation of most proposals reflected a widely held desire to use the fair to address basic planning challenges faced by Paris and its suburbs. Among these, the most fervently discussed during the interwar decades were the related problems of establishing suburban formal order and facilitating the extension of Paris. The suburbs, long neglected by planners and victimized by careless private development, now seemed to offer the potential for large-scale planning projects that the city could no longer accommodate. By conceiving of such projects as "extensions" of the Parisian fabric, urbanists hoped not only

Figure 9.7 Beaudouin and Lods competition entry for the Paris 1937 Exposition site. *L'Architecture d'Aujourd'hui* December 1932. © 2007 Artists Rights Society, New York/ADAGP, Paris.

to forge more fluid physical and visual connections between urban and suburban space, but also to provide strong formal patterns—derived from Parisian academic traditions—with which to direct suburban growth.

In the case of the Beaudouin and Lods Mont Valérien proposal, the specific suburban location was significant. Not only had the fort been of interest to urbanists for years, making it a logical site for the exposition, but it also bordered the commune of Suresnes, where Henri Sellier was mayor ("Le Concours . . ." 1932: 152). Sellier headed the Public Housing Office of the suburban Seine Départment, and in this capacity he had hired Beaudouin and Lods to design the office's Cité de la Muette housing at Drancy. Sellier was also a prominent promoter of regional planning and of the development of suburban *cités-jardins*; while he was mayor, Suresnes became a demonstration of such development and of the role that activist municipal governments could play in issues of housing and urbanism (Burlen 1987). In 1935 Sellier hired Beaudouin and Lods to design the ground-breaking Open-Air School in Suresnes, which was sited just down the slope from the Mont-Valérien fort. Locating the fair on the Mont Valérien site would not only have drawn attention to Sellier's work in Suresnes, but the rehabilitation of the fort and the development of exposition facilities around it would also have addressed planners' desires for a more cohesive and controlled suburban space.

Holding the exposition on the edge of the city also made sense from the point of view of transportation. The Champ des Mars and Invalides axes—the traditional sites of Parisian expositions—were increasingly difficult to reach as volumes of automobile traffic grew. Suburban sites such as that of the Mont Valérien scheme, on the other hand, could be better integrated within more comprehensive plans for rationalizing transportation routes into and out of the city. The 1934 Paris Regional Plan prepared by Henri Prost, in addition to advocating clear political and geographical limits for the region and the communes comprising it, also proposed the creation of a series of new radial highways allowing more rapid access and egress from the city. One of these, the Autoroute de l'Ouest, was to be located just south of Suresnes, and the Beaudouin and Lods scheme for Mont Valérien suggested a linkage with it, along with a new rail transfer station and even a new western airport (Evenson 1979: 332–5). The proposal not only avoided the congestion associated with centrally located fairs, but advocated using the exposition to better organize and extend transportation networks (Udovicki 1987: 49).

Proposals to locate the 1937 exposition on the Mont Valérien hill—or anywhere in the suburbs for that matter—ultimately fell prey to powerful Parisian commercial interests (ibid.: 51). By 1933, Charles Letrosne and Jacques Gréber had published a master-plan centering the exposition on the Champs de Mars–Trocadéro axis. Nevertheless, this location remained controversial and attracted criticism even while the fair was underway. Typical were the complaints of François Latour, president of the Paris Conseil Municipal and longtime proponent of a regional outlook often summarized by the use of the phrase "La Plus Grand Paris." Latour saw the 1937 exposition as a distraction from larger problems, including the pronounced social and economic imbalances encountered when crossing from city to suburb (Latour 1936: 3–4). Henri Sellier (1937: 86), for his part, characterized the entire interwar period as "anti-urbanist and anti-architectural." Sellier argued that no significant projects had been undertaken during the period, due to administrative "timidity" and excessive control by a legislature "having total contempt for the future." Published the very month the exposition opened, this assessment can only be seen as a condemnation of the fair as indicative of the shortcomings of Parisian urbanism in general.

Concerns about the urbanistic implications of the 1937 exposition were not lost on Beaudouin, either. Even as he worked on plans for the spectacular Fêtes de la Lumière, Beaudouin published two articles that reveal his own dissatisfaction with the limited ambitions and results of Parisian planning. As the 1937 exposition was getting underway, Beaudouin published an article in *L'Architecture d'Aujourd'hui* entitled "Mystiques et espaces," in which he complained about the lack of substantial open spaces in Paris. His argument was at least partly inspired by the choice of the site for the exposition. In choosing the Trocadéro site, Beaudouin argued, the exposition's organizers had not only contributed to the congestion of central Paris, they had also deprived the exposition and the city of a significant space for large gatherings.

In the article, Beaudouin made a distinction between different types and functions of open space. One function, inspired by concerns for hygiene and economic efficiency, was to improve circulation and to aerate and decongest the center of the city. This aim was normally achieved by streets and intersections whose main usefulness was for traffic. Unfortunately, he argued, overcrowding and choked circulation had become such daunting problems that the efforts of government administrators and planners had by necessity been focused on these issues. But the article also discussed another more important function of open space: its ability to serve as a setting for public gatherings and events on a grand scale. This called for extremely large and entirely empty spaces, as opposed to those such as the Champ de Mars and the Place de la Concorde which, although big, were also obstructed by gardens or isolated by traffic.

The plan for the 1937 exposition was, for Beaudouin, indicative of these problems. On the one hand, as others had observed, the fair's central location had only exacerbated problems of circulation in the capital. But beyond this, rather than contributing new lasting open spaces to the city, the exposition was taking part in their erasure. Ironically the Champ des Mars, so central to the appeal of the fair site, had its origins in the very kind of openness Beaudouin valued. Initially justified for its usefulness as a military drill field, the vastness of the site had gradually been consumed by development and, since 1889, by the dominating presence of the Eiffel Tower. Beaudouin's article emphasized this loss by including an illustration of the Champ des Mars during the revolutionary period, which indicated its size and openness, its location on the very edge of the city, and its ability to accommodate grand festivals.

Beyond the specific case of the Champ des Mars, Beaudouin lamented the generalized loss of open space in the city; where open space was preserved, it suffered from an overemphasis—even if dictated by real problems—on its utilitarian applications:

> In the fever to build so that we could house new arrivals to the city, we've forgotten over the past century that a composition of any sort requires both solids and voids—and the Champ des Mars has disappeared. Nevertheless, it is easy to take note of the extraordinary importance of an empty and naked volume in the physiognomy of a city.
>
> (Beaudouin 1937: 92)

Rather than being devoted to the efficient functioning of cities, "empty and naked volumes" were suited to the kind of large communal *manifestations* characteristic of modern public life (Beaudouin 1937: 93). The sorts of spaces Beaudouin had in mind were indicated by the article's illustrations, which included drawings or photographs of the Maidan-i-Shah in Isfahan and the piazza San Marco in Venice.

These spaces were important not only because they were large and empty. They mattered mostly because they acted as settings for communal life; their size and emptiness allowed them to be filled with spontaneous or organized mass assemblies. That Beaudouin was thinking primarily of the latter is made clear by the types of highly orchestrated gatherings shown in the photographs: the Red Square filled with formations of troops, a parade on Broadway, a public funeral on the *parvis* at Nôtre-Dame, a Nazi spectacle in Nuremberg, and—as has been noted—a revolutionary festival on the Champ de Mars. The bizarre juxtaposition of the last two images, and the overall range of political content represented, did not seem to concern Beaudouin. What was important about these spaces was their presence, and their availability as a sort of basic equipment that modern cities required.

Four years earlier, Beaudouin had toured the United States, and had recorded his observations for the readers of *L'Architecture d'Aujourd'hui*. He was impressed by the intentional and infrastructural approach Americans were bringing to transportation issues, seen in the limited-access highways and cloverleaf intersections that would soon transform the American landscape. Stopping in Chicago to visit the 1933 Century of Progress Exhibition, Beaudouin noted a similarly intentional approach to the provision of open space along the Lake Michigan shoreline:

> When beautification and expansion studies were undertaken, the creation of a green zone was projected between the lake and the blocks neighboring it. Dredging, combined with the shallowness of the water, has allowed the claiming of large areas of the lakeshore. Extending for kilometers, the city thus finds itself isolated from this inland sea by parks dotted with pleasure ports, lined with promenades, paths, roadways, playing fields, clubs . . . and these works proceed each day.
>
> (Beaudouin 1933: 67)

If the vast lakefront green space had been envisioned by Daniel Burnham's 1909 Plan, its continuing implementation was supported by the judicious placement of the Century of Progress Exhibition. By partially placing the fair on landfill in Lake Michigan, fair organizers had not only reinforced the long-range goals of the Burnham Plan, but had also made possible the kind of open space Beaudouin would later advocate for Paris. Beaudouin's description of the exhibition site and its effects generally foreshadowed the ways the Seine would be exploited in 1937. The Century of Progress design, Beaudouin reported:

> is a closed composition around a great empty space. The central reflecting pond permits distant views of the opposite shore, and the effects of these views are doubled through reflection. All of the life and movement of this great *ensemble* is concentrated on the banks, terraces, and stands that border the lake. This plan is quite spectacular because the visitor, whatever his situation, always has a panoramic view of the entire exposition. Since the flow of circulation runs alongside the water, the crowd itself participates in the spectacle—a kind of grand circus in which everyone sees and is seen.
> (Beaudouin 1933: 66)

For Beaudouin, the plan of the Chicago exposition—and the spectacular setting it provided—was the high point of the fair.

There was also much to lament, however, including the absence of French participation, and its representation instead by the "Street of Paris" exhibit. The architecture of the pavilions was judged "mediocre" and "chaotic." Their painting schemes, in particular, lacked coherence, since they were developed primarily to take advantage of being lit artificially at night. In their nighttime transformation, however, Beaudouin found an admirable energy, achieved through combinations of "light, color, and music, the movement of the crowd, the compositions of banners, and water" (Beaudouin 1933: 67). In articulating the various sensory components of the spectacle, he identified sound and light as discrete compositional elements—newly available to the designer thanks to electric power and other technologies. These elements could be freely combined with more traditional aspects of the urban scene such as buildings, decorations, and water, and the entire composition could be animated by a final element: the frenetic energy of the crowd—expanded and intensified through the modern mass-gathering.

The ability of technology to create new compositional tools for the designer, and thus to reinvigorate urban experience, would become a prominent theme in the promotion and assessment of the later Paris Exposition. From the terraces of the Trocadéro, the platforms of the Eiffel Tower, or from the banks and bridges of the Seine, the spectator took part in a modernization of the baroque ideals that had shaped the city: not only were sculpture, painting, architecture, and music fused into a powerful single entity on an urban scale, they were also transformed and their potential expanded through the infusion of new technical means. Electric light was the key to this transformation, capable of releasing hidden visual dimensions from long-used elements of the art of urban design. "Light," predicted Edmond Labbé before the exposition opened:

> will play on the stones of the palaces, inundating them with colors as varied as they are unexpected. It will amuse itself by making the trees greener than could nature. It will cause floods of gold and silver to gush from the Trocadéro fountains. It will aim its projectors and fireworks on the Seine, the *voie Royale* of the exposition, sprinkled with metal dust. It will transform the banal iron of the Tour Eiffel into a dazzling brightness, realizing the ancient dream of the medieval alchemists.
>
> (Labbé 1937b: 100)

The transformative potential of light was condensed in the *Fête de la Lumière* productions organized by Beaudouin and Lods, but also in Granet's illumination designs for the Eiffel Tower and the Quai d'Orsay, in the brilliantly lit Trocadéro fountains of Expert and Maitre, and in Rob Mallet-Stevens' *Palais de la Lumière*, marked by the most powerful electric beacon and the largest projection screen yet invented (Lemoine and Rivoirard 1987: 222–3).

The wonders of electric light seemed to be the central fact of the exposition, representing the merging of art and technique that the fair stood for. In their elaborate textual celebrations of light, fair organizers revealed their faith, which Paul Greenhalgh has described, "in the mystical ability of abstract art forms, in conjunction with technology, to solve the world's ills" (Greenhalgh 1988: 24). Those ills were represented by the darkness of night, which modern techniques were now banishing. This rhetorical theme was picked up, no doubt, from the many theorists of the 1920s who celebrated electric light for its ability to equalize day and night. Werner Oechslin has pointed to the relationship between this idea and Ernst Cassirer's conception of "mystical space," which "derives primarily from contrast between day and night, between light and darkness" (Oechslin 1993: 28).

For Beaudouin, a mystical sense of space resulted when urban spaces of great size, emptiness, and cultural importance became filled with the pageantry of modern mass gatherings. If central Paris, in 1937, lacked such spatial equipment, and if the exposition had failed to stimulate new urban development by extending the city at its edges, then perhaps these limitations could be countered through the new urban compositional elements offered by the technologies of spectacle. If the architecture of light was able to conquer the space of darkness, then couldn't the urbanism of light expand space altogether? The 1937 festivals suggested that the existing monumental spaces of Paris could be infused with sound and light, and that the crowd, surrounded by the delights afforded by technology, would thereby take part in a modernized urbanism capable of transcending its own political and spatial limitations.

Beaudouin's idea of mystical space assumed an extension of spatial experience beyond that of its apparent physical reality, facilitated by technical means but not understood in only technical terms. The challenge for architects and urbanists was to incorporate new techniques of spectacle into their practices—

to maintain their faith in art while at the same time mastering technique. The work of the Beaudouin and Lods partnership throughout the 1930s suggests the difficulty of that proposition. Beaudouin's "*grand place*" scheme at the Cité de la Muette, for example, aspired to symbolize and contain the social energy of the community, and to gather the disparate urban elements that would give the community form: its church, schools, and shops. These aspirations collapsed under the weight of political and economic realities, but also under the pressure of the technical orientation of housing production. Promoters of the project in the 1930s stressed its many technological innovations, rather than its urban ideal. Eventually, the project was halted, its *grand place* reduced to three wings of bare apartments, and its later adoption as a Nazi internment camp assuring its infamy (Weddle 2001).

During the 1937 Exposition, the architectural press focused on the technical achievements of Beaudouin and Lods in orchestrating the sound-and-light festivals, while official guides and popular journals reported the dazzling effects of the shows. In the years to come, technical challenges like those encountered in the festivals would claim an increasing share of the architects' work, but would be applied to more prosaic tasks such as equipping buildings. Urban design would become a largely technical procedure, faced with the daunting task of post-war reconstruction. The ambitious urban claims of the 1937 festivals, made in the sunset of the era of the great international expositions, looked ahead to a time when art and technique truly might be fused on a grand and popular scale. With the passing of that era, though, architects would seldom get the chance to carry out such optimistic experiments in the name of an invigorated, if ephemeral, urbanism.

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10

Festival urbanism

Carnival as an expression of civil society in nineteenth-century Basel

Christine Macy

Each February, in the wee hours of the morning, the city of Basel is transformed by the first event of *Fasnacht* during its carnival week. Called *Morgenstreich*, it involves groups of costumed paraders who suddenly appear from dark alleys and silent squares bearing giant painted gas-lit lanterns, piping on piccolos and beating on drums (Figure 10.1). They wind chaotically through the streets of the medieval city, moving from anywhere to everywhere with no apparent destination, raising a raucous clamour and casting a magical light in the dark winter morning of this Swiss city. One cortege crosses the next, as their itineraries intertwine through the city streets until dawn, when the groups disperse for a warming soup in a local restaurant cellar.

Basel's Fasnacht is unlike any other carnival, and it has an intimate connection to this city of alleys and small squares, medieval and eighteenth-century buildings of stucco and stone. The pre-dawn Morgenstreich is followed by other, more apparently "official" versions of the event on the days that follow, as scores of lantern-carrying cliques parade down the city's principal avenues in broad daylight before throngs of tourists; brass bands perform chaotic musical medleys; and citizens compete in public readings of satirical verse. Morgenstreich feels like a relic from an earlier time—a willfully anarchic event prized and guarded by locals, who perhaps host the subsequent events as decoys for tourists.

Baslers consider their Fasnacht the "*drey scheenschte Dääg*," or the "three most beautiful days" of the year. It is created by a large number of social societies that reflect virtually every interest group, club, association or community group in the city, and include people of all ages and backgrounds. These groups, known as *cliques*, meet throughout the year to plan the theme for their lantern, costumes and masks. The theme is usually directed at current events, and is always handled satirically: mocking and ridiculing personalities, local controversies and world events. Small leaflets are distributed with satirical verse, and these themes are again addressed in the staged poetry-slinging matches known as *Schnitzelbänke*. An official city-wide committee raises funds, interprets the

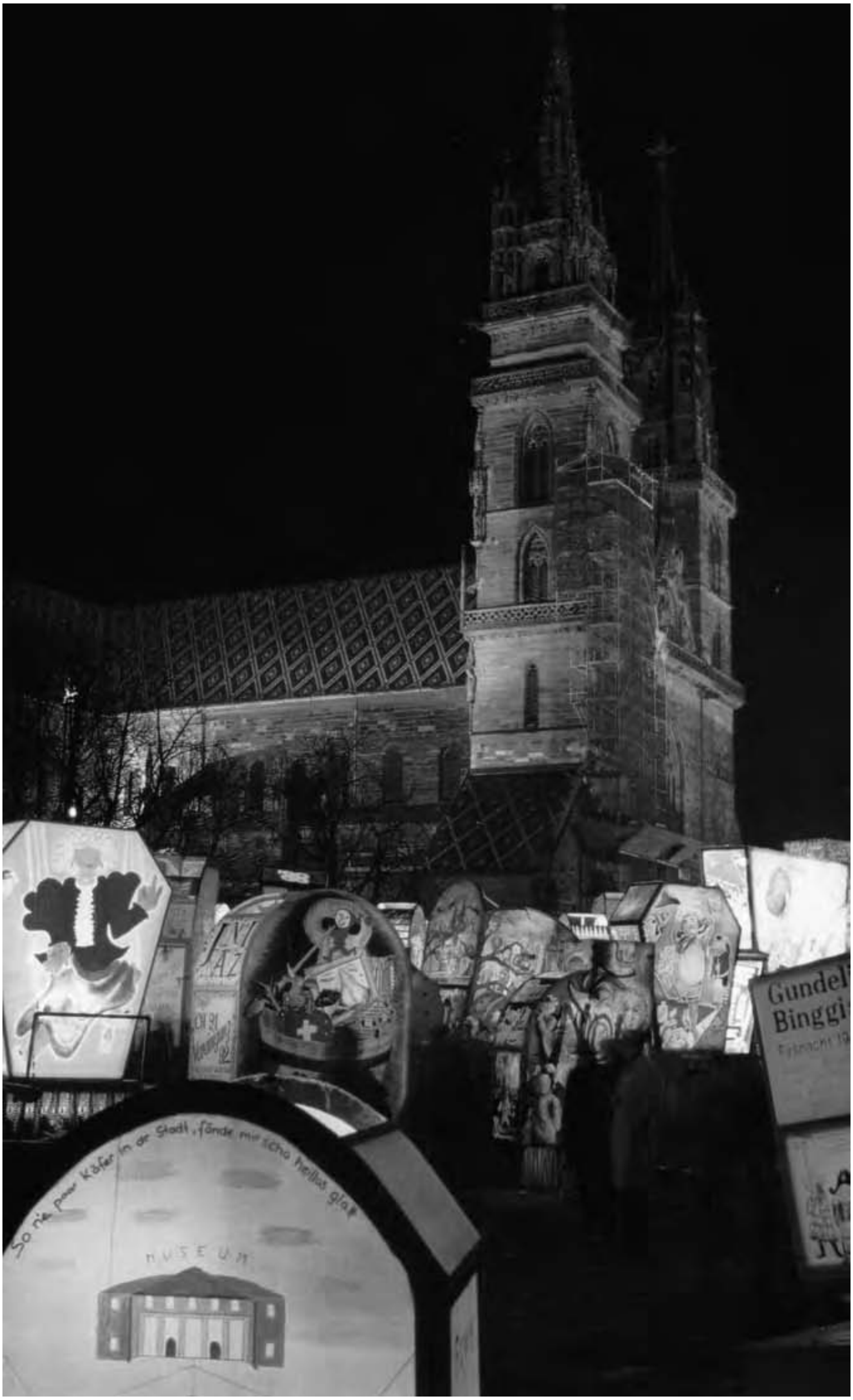


Figure 10.1 Lantern display on Cathedral Square, Basel. Photographer unknown.

event for tourists, produces the promotional literature, and awards prizes to the participants in myriad categories.

This event is intimately interwoven with the urban identity of Baslers. The complex structure of the festival week allows Fasnacht to appeal to the young and anarchically inclined as a transgressive and transformative event, but equally to more conservative citizens as an established tradition that reinforces the essential character of the city and its inhabitants. Basel's street and squares, landmarks and monuments are given meaning through the annual enactment of Fasnacht. The event involves only a limited expenditure in festival architecture —in the lanterns and audience stands—but it completely occupies the entire urban space of the city for its duration. It makes a central aspect of Basel's urban geography, what Henri Lefebvre calls its "imagined" dimension, visible (Harvey 1989: 261; see also Lefebvre 1991). Clique cellars all across town become crowded workshops and social centers; clique secrecy and competition lends renewed significance to old urban districts; the city's major plazas in front of the cathedral, the market square and its principal bridges are once again fully occupied. I am interested here in the relationship between this event and civic identity, the way the city seems to "come alive" during the event, with its streets, plazas and buildings fully inhabited and set into counterpoint. If we think of Paris in terms of its boulevards, and Vienna in terms of its Ringstrasse, then we could say that Basel is a city of its Fasnacht. Fasnacht is a form of temporary urbanism, a moment in urban life when a city is completely explained and all of its parts play a role. It is Basel's culture—meaning, to use Clifford Geertz's formulation, a story that Baslers tell themselves about themselves (Geertz 1973) —and the city can best be understood through the lens of Fasnacht. Like the Palio for Siena, Fasnacht for Basel has its roots deep in the city's history. This is not say that the event we see today is anything like older *Fasching* (carnival) celebrations in Basel. In fact, it has its origins in the late nineteenth century, being virtually invented as a "historic" event at a time of significant economic and societal transformation in the city.

Basel, like most European cities, experienced significant immigration during its industrialization in the nineteenth century. Yet it differed in one significant respect from neighboring French, German and Swiss cities by keeping political power in the hands of the medieval guilds and reserving citizenship and voting rights for a very small number of residents. In this chapter, I will explore how Basel's Fasnacht offered a way for immigrants who were structurally disenfranchised from civic government to develop social networks among themselves, gain visibility and a voice on civic matters and eventually, to acquire sufficient presence in the civic realm to bring about their own enfranchisement. According to the historian Lionel Gossman, Fasnacht "was viewed by the radicals of the 1840s as a token of future egalitarian order that would replace the deep social divisions of everyday life in the city" (Gossman 2000: 91). In this sense, Fasnacht was for immigrant Baslers what the Ringstrasse was for bourgeois Viennese (Schorske 1981)—a civic platform to place a liberal and middle-class agenda in the public eye. In other words, it is a form of urban design through public programming—call it a "temporary urbanism."

Fasnacht as an activity of the city's elites 1780–1848

But before entering into a discussion of Fasnacht's role in the political and urban development of nineteenth-century Basel, we must first sketch out the city's situation at the onset of its industrialization. The urban form and institutional structures of Basel had changed little from the time of their establishment in the thirteenth century until the end of the eighteenth century. Life in pre-industrial Basel revolved around the guilds and societies. To exercise a trade or craft of any sort within the city, guild membership was obligatory. The guilds possessed significant influence in the city's government, balancing the nobility and ecclesiastical powers. In the town of Little Basel across the Rhine, three "honorary societies" played a similar role to those of the guilds in Greater Basel.

> To be a citizen of Basel meant to be a member of one of the eighteen officially recognized guilds [or honorary societies]. Even merchants and wholesalers who did not practice one of the traditional crafts were required to be members of a guild. "Guildsman" and "citizen" were thus overlapping designations. . . . The officers of the guilds elected the membership of the . . . Senate, and were themselves eligible for election; it was thus through the guilds that the individual citizen exercised his political rights. . . . The guilds were not simply professional organizations, . . . they were the basic political organs of the state.
>
> (Gossman 2000: 20)

In addition to the guilds and honorary societies, there were a number of societies associated with the districts between the inner and outer ring of urban fortifications, from St Johann's district in the north to St Alban's district in the south. Since the late fourteenth century, the guilds and societies were responsible for defending sections of the city's outer walls—residents of the southernmost district of St Alban's, for example, being required to patrol the first four towers inward from the banks of the Rhine, the next three being assigned to the wine merchants', tailors' and sewers' guilds, and so forth, until the entire perimeter had been allocated (Rebmann 2006).

Each guild or society had a "house" for their association, by which their society was informally known. This was generally a several-story building with an armory, a drinking room and kitchen on the ground floor, and a meeting hall on the upper level. The guilds of the merchant elite—the textile merchants, bankers, wine merchants, and spice merchants—outfitted their buildings with dance halls, smoking rooms, storerooms and retail stores, and decorated them with tapestries and wall paintings. By contrast, the *Haus zum Magd*, the seat of the St Johanns district society, was a small building with just a few rooms (Rebmann 2006). The houses of district societies were on the main streets of their neighborhoods, while those of the guilds were located near the centers of activity for their trades: for the most part on Freie Strasse or Gerbergasse, the principal commercial streets of Basel, or at the junction of these two streets in Market Square (Figures 10.2 and 10.3).

The roots of street Fasnacht lie in this context, in the banquets and masquerade balls hosted by guilds at the beginning of the Lenten season. The city's district societies too, sponsored banquets and masked balls like the guilds, but they also organized Monday and Wednesday processions for young men and children in their neighborhoods (Bürgi 1998: 13). The historian Thomas Bürgi describes one such procession hosted by the society *zum Hohen Dolder*, named after their society house in the district of St Albans:

> For the Fasnacht of 1783, it sponsored a parade for the adults of the district, and permitted other districts to register their children in the event. The procession was organized like a military parade: with a captain, chief grenadiers, a lieutenant, flag bearers, a corporal and other specialists. Most of the procession was comprised of simple soldiers, called "grenadiers," these positions were filled by young men. Behind them, followed costumed boys and girls. [. . .] Before the Fasnacht, the young men took part in marching drills around the city. Two Sundays they marched and practiced military formations in rural areas outside the city, accompanied by the watchmen from the district society and hired military drummers.

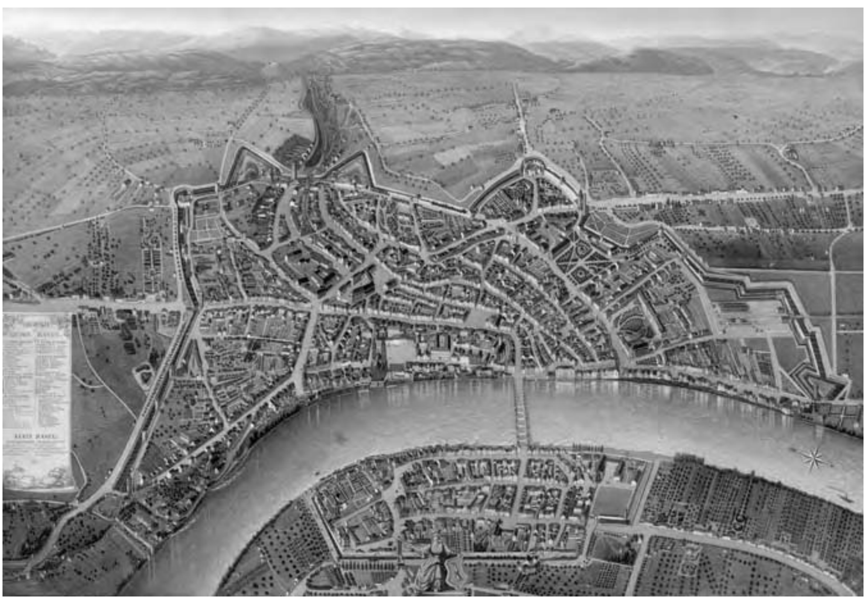


Figure 10.2 Bird's-eye view of Basel before demolition of its walls, Johann Friedrich Mähly, 1847. SABS, Bild 1, 835.

Figure 10.3 Market square in Basel, drawing by Constantin Guise, 1834. SABS, Bild Wack. D 156.

Early on Fasnacht Monday, at the *zum Hohen Dolder* society headquarters, the procession began. In the lead were the "officers," sons of the city's elite families. They were followed by the "lower officers" and "specialists," who were sons of guild members; behind them came the grenadiers, half of which were from families of guild members and the other half were non-citizens, including a few young paper workers at the paper factory in St Alban valley. All the youth marched in military uniform and bearing weapons. Behind them were the children of the quarter, in various costumes. Again, most of these were from guild families, and only a few non-citizens. There was a cost involved in taking part in the procession, graduated according to the military rank one represented. Three men, dressed in the society's colors, represented zum Hohen Dolder. Four others were responsible for maintaining order and decorum, ensuring that the armed youth remained in procession, and that poor children and non-paying spectators didn't join in. As musical accompaniment, the society hired seven musicians from the Hüningen fortress and four drummers from the city garrison.

The march led through St Alban's district along the St Alban valley. In front of the society headquarters, the grenadiers gave their first armed salute. The second station was the Steinencloister [a home for unwed mothers], then to the cathedral square, where the grenadiers had to drill with their arms in front of the mayor, and fire another salute. Finally, they marched

> to the powerful houses in the city, visiting the society headquarters of each guild and district society in Greater Basel and the three honorary societies of Little Basel. At each stop, they fired their weapons and collected "shooting money." In the evening, they returned to their district house, where the collected money—a considerable amount—was distributed to the youth. Only the grenadiers were paid: around four pounds each. The procession went off without a hitch. On the afternoon of [the following day], the society hosted a masquerade ball for parade participants in their headquarters.
>
> (Bürgi 1998: 14)

The structure of the parade mirrored the stratification of Basel's society. First as an event located in the St Alban's district, a favored residential area for the city's wealthiest inhabitants, it was led by sons of the city's highest-ranking citizens. All the other participants in the parade were arranged according to their social standing and their ability to pay; and those with no standing and no money were excluded. The itinerary too, is significant, calling on all the guilds, society halls, and other sites of civil authority, before returning to the home district for a celebratory banquet and ball. The procession traces a network of dependencies between the district and the rest of the city, literally knitting this society into the city's political structure and reinforcing its civic hierarchies. The youth were dressed in uniform and carried weapons, in recognition of their future military obligations as members of a society or a guild. But as armed paraders in a festive season, they also represent a certain threat, as we see in their collection of "shooting money."

Victor Turner joins many other anthropologists in seeing such:

> reversals or inversions in carnival as means of letting off steam, *Ventilsitten*. The classic formulation of rites of rebellion states that rebellious ritual occurs only within an established and unchallenged social order [and is] effective so long as there is no querying of the order within which the ritual of protest is set.
>
> (Babcock 1978: 22; see also Turner 1977 and 1982)

In this way, Fasnacht events in traditional Basel were understood by the city's elites to reinforce the structure of urban society and were therefore supported by them. Yet, as we will see, carnival in Basel would ultimately play a more active role in transforming that structure, corresponding to Natalie Zemon Davis's view of such events. A historian of early modern Europe (and a colleague of Turner at Princeton), Davis argues that carnival makes potential alternatives to the social order visible, and can indeed transform social hierarchies, even if slowly. Her study of sixteenth-century French festivals focused on popular celebration organized by lay societies, put on by circles of friends and family, professional guilds and confraternities, and often by groups of young men organized just for these purposes into what she calls the "Abbeys of Misrule:"

> Both in the Renaissance and in our own day, two modes of explanation have been used to account for the form and content of popular festivities and games—one historical, the other functional. . . . [The historical theories] rest on a picture of city-dwellers either acting out ancient and magical customs whose meaning had long since been forgotten or copying their social superiors just for the sake of copying. . . . [In the second approach,] carnival, masks and misrule are usually seen as functional characteristics of . . . traditionalist, pre-industrial societies [and that] their apparent disorder is actually a source of order in societies lacking in contractual relationships. [In short,] carnival is seen as a prepolitical safety valve for the members of a structured, hierarchical society.
>
> (Davis 1987: 101–3)

Yet from the perspective of her work on the history of carnival in Europe she continues, "It is an exaggeration to view carnival and misrule as merely a safety valve, as merely a primitive, prepolitical form of recreation. Victor Turner and Mikhail Bakhtin are closer to the truth in seeing it as present in all cultures. I would say not only that it is present, but that the structure of the carnival form can evolve so that it can act both to reinforce order and to suggest alternatives to the existing order" (Davis 1987: 112). We shall see that this was indeed the case with Basel's Fasnacht over the course of the nineteenth century.

In the early part of the century, Basel's carnival season hosted other processions and public events as well, organized and financed by wealthy young men from the guilds in spite of attempts by some fervently evangelical citizens of "pious Basel" to repress theatrical performances. These elaborate public theatricals involved sumptuous artistic displays: such as a "peasant and prince" procession in 1812; a medieval "bridal" procession in 1820 (with 81 horses, six wagons and two carriages, re-enacting the nuptials between Count Otto of Thierstein and Catherine of Klingen); the "downfall of the buffoon army" that used weapons from the city's arsenal in 1822; a "chivalric" procession in 1834; and a "traveling arts" procession in 1836 (Gantner 1971: 61). Such processions were generally supported by city authorities, although they were monitored for inappropriate license, and the wearing of religious garb was forbidden altogether.

In the 1830s, the rural hinterland of Basel successfully broke free from city rule in a series of uprisings collectively known as the *Basler Wirren*, or "Basel troubles." The incentive behind this political rupture was an increasing contradiction between the city's monopoly on political power and the industrialization of its rural regions. Basel's tightly structured society of guilds, artisans and merchant elites resisted the political liberalization that was taking place throughout the rest of Switzerland. As well, its restrictive immigration laws, dating from the sixteenth century, had led to a steady decline in Basel's population so that by the beginning of the nineteenth century, much of the city's land between the thirteenth-century inner wall and the fifteenth-century outer wall was open fields and gardens (Gossman 2000: 19). Ultimately, Basel's restrictions on citizenship and voting privileges could not endure the pressures of industrialization and the liberalization of Swiss politics. The expansion of its commercial sector into industrial manufactures—particularly of textiles and silk ribbons—and the steady growth of a rural working-class population led to an explosive contradiction between the closed city government and an exploited and disenfranchised rural population. The result was a civil war that led to division of the canton into independent city- and country-cantonal governments. After the cantonal split, Basel's elite families withdrew their support for public celebrations of Fasnacht on the city streets—such as the parades and even Morgenstreich—instead sponsoring private events such as masquerade balls and theatrical performances during the Fasnacht season. These were by invitation only and restricted to members of their social class (Bürgi 1998: 18). Since street Fasnacht had long been discouraged by the city's religious authorities in the Evangelical church as a suspiciously "Catholic" practice, there was little institutional support and the processions that remained were small or ad hoc affairs mounted by groups of young men during the carnival week (Trümpy 1971: 20).

Immigrants adopt Fasnacht and turn its focus on politics 1848–70

In spite of the political division of Basel into two half-cantons, manufacturing did not restrict itself to the city's hinterland. With steam replacing waterpower after 1830, larger factories were built in the city and industrialization began in earnest. The industrialization of Basel was accompanied by a rapid increase in its population. In 1830, the city had 22,000 inhabitants. By 1860 there were 35,000; by 1870, 44,000; and by 1880, over 60,000. By that time, only 28 percent of the population held Basel-city citizenship; 38 percent were citizens of other cantons and 34 percent were non-Swiss, primarily from the German-speaking lands of Baden and Württemburg (Schaffner 1972: 2: Pfister 1976).

New immigrants into the city found there was no place secured for them in the city's traditional social structure, and they complained about how they were treated in the workplace and in the society at large. In the newspaper *The Worker*, complaints such as this were aired, "As soon as the worker enters the factory, . . . he is viewed and treated as an underling, a person with no free will and no rights." In an article in the *People's Friend*, "we workers are seen as machines and not as men and fathers" (Schaffner 1972: 6). Basel's urban society was no more welcoming to middle-class immigrants, who were prevented from exercising their trade or profession within the city and excluded from guild membership and the associated right to vote in cantonal elections. They were also, for the most part, refused membership in social clubs and associations. In response, immigrants created their own social associations, often mimicking the forms of the elite associations[1]—establishing their society headquarters in local restaurants or pubs. These varied widely according to the immigrants' region of origin, their interests, political or religious convictions, and pastimes such as music or sports (or both, as in the hunting-music club). Several were named after their city district, such as the *Steinleme*r (named after the Steinen district), *Aeschlemer* (after the Aeschen district), *St Johanneslemer*, *Vereinigte Spalemer* and *Kleinbasler*. Many of these associations increasingly found Fasnacht at the center of their social planning over the year, and a few dedicated themselves primarily to Fasnacht (Zinstag-Preiswerk 1912: 58; Meier 1992: 73).

By mid-century, we see the first use of the term *clique* and the expression "friends of Fasnacht" (Trümpy 1971: 20). The first cliques were not permanent associations but ad hoc groups that re-formed each year. Some began as wagon cliques, organized around a particular theme that they developed into a float and associated costumes. A watercolour from the mid-nineteenth century shows a small cortege descending the Kohlenberg hill during Morgenstreich, as another group converges in the background (Figure 10.4). Many of the features of present-day Fasnacht are present in this image, including shoulder-borne and stick-mounted lanterns, the major-domo (with thigh-high boots) and mascot (wearing a bearskin hat), piccolo-player and drummers, and the wearing of masks. Although the theme of this cortege is not clear, its carnivalesque character is—in the motley array of costumes that include feminine, military, and religious dress and jesters' caps that suspiciously resemble the liberty caps of the French *sans-culottes*.

Figure 10.4 Morgenstreich on Kohlenberg, *c*.1850. © Dr. Beat Trachsler.

As Basel's elite citizens withdrew their support for public Fasnacht parades, the character of these events changed. In lieu of the spectacular and costly extravaganzas of the first quarter of the century, from the 1840s onwards, pre-dawn Morgenstreich processions and the more formal afternoon parades were made up of smaller groups from the middle-class, artisanal and employee sectors of the society, many of whom were recent immigrants without political rights in the city. That these Fasnacht processions were staged by new immigrants is clear from the comment of a pastor in 1840, "The growing roughness and indecency of festival participants show that it is increasingly the lower sort of people who mask themselves during our Fasnacht" (Trümpy 1971: 20). In 1843, a conservative newspaper echoed these sentiments and inferred further they may be due to foreign agitation, "this year's Fasnacht . . . is less truly humorous; rather indulging in the sort of Carnival humor that used to hold sway in the cities of the Rhine" (Trümpy 1971: 19).

Parade themes changed as well. While the earlier parades addressed historical or artistic themes, these parades handled topics of immediate and often political concern. We can see an example in an excerpt from the *Swiss National Newspaper* of 1848:

> Basel: our Fasching has begun; already at four in the morning Morgenstreich drums are swirling in all quarters of the city and colorful paper lanterns are casting their shadows on the grotesque groups of young and old. The most successful is a parade with a beautifully drawn lantern about the recent events in Switzerland: the struggles against the *Sonderbund* and Prussian rule in the canton of Neuenburg formed the principal motifs.
>
> (SN 13.03.1848 cited in Trachsler 1985: 270)

The themes identified in this account couldn't offer a greater contrast to the themes addressed by the elites two decades earlier. The terms *Sonderbund* and "Prussian rule" referred to political events of the previous year that had direct implications for political life in Basel: the former was a political organization of Swiss Ultramontanists and Jesuits that had gained the upper hand against liberal reforms in seven Catholic cantons. Their armed uprising in 1847 had been defeated by the Swiss federalists in November of that year, and the Jesuits were subsequently expelled from Switzerland. The subject of "Prussian rule in the canton of Neuenburg" referred to a struggle between that canton's Prussian overlords and its new position as a member of the Swiss federation. Modern technology also made an appearance. In honor of the first train station to be opened in Basel, the terminus of a line arriving from from Strasbourg in the newly French region of Alsace, lantern-painter Samuel Baur-Lippe recalls:

> We had a lantern made up in the form of a train. The wheels could be set into motion and with a plate of lit sawdust, we had the pleasure of seeing the chimney stack let off a steady stream of smoke. At that time, I did

> racy [*flott*] paintings of the revolution in Paris, the attack on the Tuileries, the flight of Louis-Phillipe—the last of these especially pleased the other paraders.
>
> (Baur-Lippe 1985: 272)

The Fasnacht parade of the following year continued this political orientation, addressing the momentous events of 1848 with focused jibes at the great powers of Europe and a representation of impending democracy. On the one hand, viewers saw the recently deposed French King Louis-Philippe, along with the anti-revolutionary generals Louis Cavaignac of France and Count Joseph Jellachich of Austria, and a representation of the newly established German naval fleet. On the side of revolution and modernity, the German radicals Friedrich Hecker and Gustav von Struwe were portrayed, along with the fictitious Baron Eisele and his sidekick Dr Beisele from the satirical Bavarian newspaper *Fliegende Blätter* and, for spice, King Ludwig of Bavaria with his controversial mistress the "Spanish" dancer Lola Montez. Each of these floats rolled by onlookers in a colorful procession. The best float however, in the opinion of theologian and Fasnacht devotee Karl Rudolph Hagenbach, was the "democratic mill, in which crowned and decorated heads were tossed in, coming out the other end with mustaches and beards. That was the best display of all" (Koelner 1939: 126). In this float, democracy was a grinder that chewed up great and petty potentates and produced revolutionaries. Its representation as a machine made the implication all the more explicit—democracy is coming just as surely as the locomotive from France will pull into the newly built "Alsatian" station in the heart of Basel (Figures 10.5 and 10.6).

The five great powers of Austria, France, England, Prussia and Russia were represented as an orchestra, serenading the "democratic mill" with their instruments:

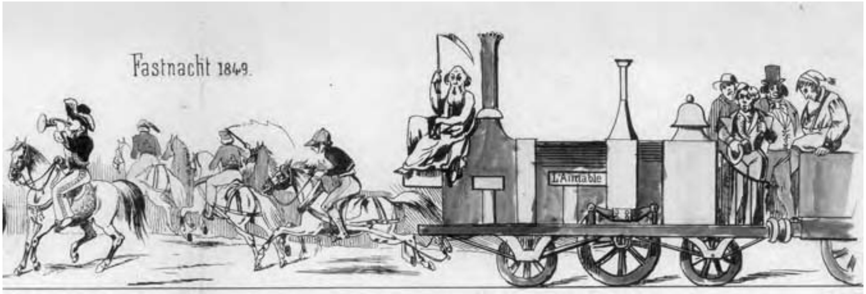
Sorgt nur, dass ein jeder greife	We care only that each of us reaches
Recht hoch und kräftig den ton,	The notes clear and sharp in our song,
Es tanzt nach unserer Pfeife	By now nearly all of *Europa*
Fast ganz Europa schon.	Is already marching along.

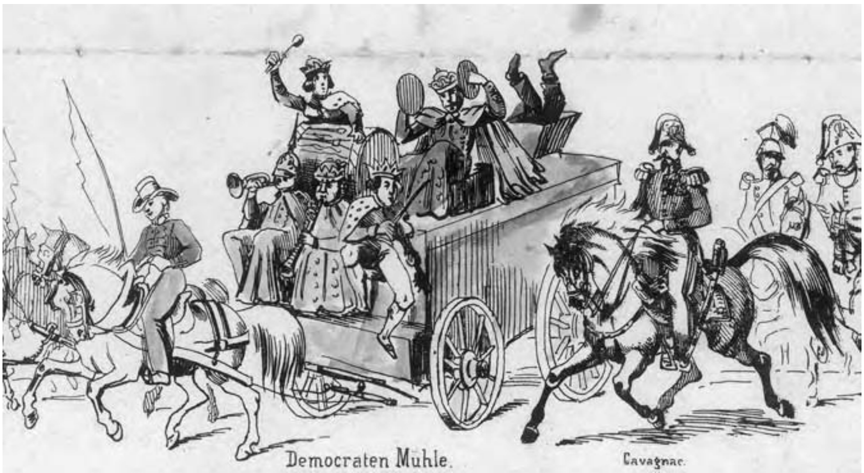
That the revolutionary spirit sweeping across Europe might augur trouble for Basel's elites was suggested by a bad-tempered Englishman riding on a donkey:

Mögen auch alle sich schlagen tot,	Those angelic altar boys —
Die Himmelssackermenter!	Each wants to do the other in!
So fürcht'ich die Basler Bändel allein	So now I fear for the ribbon trade
Und die Basler Posamenter!	Basel's kings of silk and braid!

(Koelner 1939: 127)

This point was not missed on Hagenbach, who ruminated on the implications of such political Fasnacht displays during the Lenten season:





Figures 10.5–10.6 Fasnacht procession in 1849. On the top, the "*L'aimable*" (the lovable one) float depicting the train from France, and below, the "democratic mill" float, in which crowned heads were thrown in the top to come out the bottom as radicalized citizens with mustaches and beards. SABS, Bild 16, 3.

> We had better do penance in sackcloth and ashes than make fun of such a serious year—who knows, how soon our fools at home will be driven out! . . . Cleverness always has its way, until it's aimed at higher places.
>
> (Koelner 1939: 125)

Yet the free-thinking and progressive population of Basel had found Fasnacht a congenial vehicle to express their views in public, protected by the license allotted carnival.

In 1848, liberalization at the federal level was progressing far faster than in Basel, with the introduction of a new constitution which strengthened federal authority relative to the cantons and guaranteed the equality of all Swiss men, along with freedom of domicile, religion and the press. It also established a bicameral parliament with a popularly elected National Council, and a Council of States with cantonal representatives. As political events at the federal level superseded the pace of change at the cantonal level, Basel's municipal authorities were engaged in rear-guard action to resist change. Fasnacht played a crucial role in bringing the concerns of the unrepresented immigrant classes front and center in civic life. The principal targets during this period were political and religious authorities and the voices of conservatism: specifically Swiss Catholic Ultramontanists, the French Second Empire, the Prussian State and the Vatican. Lantern-painter Samuel Baur-Lippe recalls, "In the 1840s, when I began to participate in processions, lanterns were painted with caricatures of Jesuits, aristocrats and popes. Each [Fasnacht] participant had to contribute a few coins [*Batzen*] for the lanterns" (Baur-Lippe 1985: 272). In 1852 for example, we see a procession lampooning Louis-Napoléon, the president of the French Republic. A satirical fly-sheet declared the French to be asses who allowed themselves to be ruled by an ape. Four of the twelve stanzas are as follows:

Ein Affe ist ein komisch Tier	An ape's a funny creature
Und gleichet einem Menschen schier;	So nearly like a man;
Steckt er sich in die uniform,	He dons a uniform
Gleicht er dem grossen Mann enorm;	and becomes Napoleon;
Die Esel helten ihen dafür,	At least the ass thinks that's the case,
Doch bleibt der Aff' ein komisch Tier . . .	But still he's only just an ape. . . .
Im Jahre "Achtundvierzig" summt	In the year of eighteen forty eight
Die Revolution und brummt!	Revolution lit up every state!
Da schleicht der Affe sich ins Land,	The ape slunk to his habitat,
Reicht allem Volk die Affenhand,	Reached out his apish hand for that,
Und grinst mit falschem Affenblick:	And with a lying simian smirk,
Es lebe hoch die Republik! . . .	Cried, "Long live the Republic!" . . .
Und als die grosse Stadt erwacht,	When Parisians woke at last
Da heisst es: "Republik Gut Nacht!"	They found their Republique long past!
Beim Freiheitsbaum wird nicht getanzt,	No liberty tree in public square,
Kanonen stehen aufgepflanzt;	Instead there's cannons everywhere;
Der Aff' hat alles umgekehrt,	The ape had everything, he's no fool,
Das halbe Land wird eingesperrt. . . .	Clamped down on France with martial rule. . . .
Doch was der Aff' nun ferner tut,	For what the ape has yet to do,
Noch in der Zukunft dunkel ruht;	We've got to wait to see it through;
Vielleicht erhöht ihn das Geschick,	Maybe he'll have a run of luck,
Vielleicht bricht er einst das Genick!	Or better yet, he'll break his neck!
Der Affe ist ein komisch Tier,	An ape's a funny creature,
Und gleichet einem Menschen schier.	So nearly like a man.

(Koelner 1939: 125)

News of the procession circulated rapidly in other cities and when a critical account of the affair appeared in a Zürich newspaper, Basel city officials fined the author of the text, a known radical.

Fasnacht groups also took up local concerns, "playing out" the implicit political dimensions of the city's reluctant but inexorable movement towards modernization. Local topics that made their way into Fasnacht themes included the new train lines, as we saw with the *L'Aimable* locomotive float of 1849. The demolition of urban landmarks was also a topic for Fasnacht treatment: for example, a sarcophagus-lantern entitled the "Burial of the Lälli-König" in 1845 referred to a beloved cameo bust that graced the Rheintor bridge which was slated for demolition (Zinstag-Preiswerk 1912: 60). That the cameo showed a king with his tongue sticking out was all the more reason to adopt it as a Fasnacht motif.[2] Similarly, the *Käppelijoch* lantern of 1858 was modeled on a dilapidated guardhouse on the Middle Bridge, a symbol of the division between Greater and Little Basel, also proposed for demolition (Plate 10a).

Fasnacht offered precious license for political satire, with the additional benefit of large local audiences and even larger readerships acquired through press coverage of the event in other cities and countries. From1848 onwards, newspapers began to cover Fasnacht as a featured event (Trumpy 1971: 20). And newspapers had multiplied with the explosion of immigration into Basel. While 17 new papers were established in the city between 1800 and 1830, the 1830s saw again that many created and the 1840s, twice as many new ones, with yet another doubling in the 1850s. By 1856 there were 256 papers in the city and by 1871, over 400! Many of these papers represented a radical direction and supported ecclesiastical reformation or were entirely anti-clerical (Schaffner 1972: 113). Large circulation dailies such as *Schweizerische Volksfreund aus Basel* (*Swiss People's Friend from Basel*), established in 1860 as an organ of the progressive Free-thinking Party, reinforced the progressive political agendas promoted in the public realm through Fasnacht. There were also strictly Fasnacht "newspapers" that preceded and followed the carnival week; many of these were one-day flyers, known as *Fasnacht-zeedel*, while others were published over a longer period (Schneider 1985: 293). The names of these papers—*Basler Narren-Zeitung*, *Narrhalla*, *Faschings-Wespen*, *Basler Lälli*, *Basler Narrenblatt*, *Basler Giggernillis*, *Schnörrewagner*, *Der Basilisk*, *d'Schnure*, *Der Dubel*, *Dumm-Peter*, *Der Joggeluner*—show their mocking, satirical tone with references to fools, wasps, the tongue-wagging Lälli-King, idiots and carnival—and in many cases, relying on inside jokes that required local knowledge. These papers, along with Fasnacht stock offerings and lotteries, were a significant source of revenue for Fasnacht groups.[3] When one considers such Fasnacht press in conjunction with the regular press, which also covered Fasnacht activities closely—analyzing and magnifying the political criticisms leveled by Fasnachtlers, and covering the reactions of civil and religious authorities to these criticisms—one understands better the democratization of the "public realm" effected through Fasnacht.

The parade of 1853 was the largest yet, with 500 people and 50 wagons—and it was focused exclusively on Swiss politics. The historian Paul Koelner saw that year's parade as representing a new peak for Fasnacht, as its critics were unable to find sufficient support in the city council to suppress the event:

> For weeks Basel has talked about nothing but Carnival. Invitations and hilarious notices in the local papers invite Fasnachtlers to the fabulous fools' show. There were events of all sorts—the organizational committee was in meetings from morning to night; one of the parades had over 500 people, 200 horses and around 50 floats, most of which were fitted out on giant wagons. The enthusiasm that swept everyone along was the best response to the 38 petitioners that requested the city council to restrict Fasnacht festivities to a single day. The petition was not approved, and on January 19, the council voted by a large majority for Fasnacht.
>
> (cited in Farine 1985: 82)

In the accompanying 93-page brochure of Fasnacht verse, the imperative of modernization, both at the political level and in terms of the city's infrastructure, was explicit:

Zwar man hört auch manchmal munkeln,	Indeed we hear it's sometimes rumored
Dass nicht all's in Ordnung sei,	All's not well, not as it should,
Dass dort tappe, tief im Dunkeln	That somewhere groping in the dark
Geistlichkeit und Klerisei.	Are clergy and the fatherhood.
Doch das wird sich jetzt entfernen	But now that will all soon be past
Seit die liebe Basel-Stadt	Since our dear Basel-Town
Ihnen sandte Öl-Laternen,	Has gifted their old city lights
Die se nicht mehr nötig hat.	'Cause gas has been laid down.
Zündet Freunde, dass es tage,	Enflaming friends and calling meetings,
Dass es leucht' in jedem Ort,	It's lit now, don't you see?
Und des Landes Wahlspruch sage:	And the canton's motto now is:
Frei der Geist und frei das Wort!	Let our minds and words be free!

(Koelner 1939: 128)

Through the 1850s and 1860s, Fasnacht subjects remained predominantly political, and could easily turn to a threatening edge, as we see in a police report from 1857 of Morgenstreich as:

> "mostly mean masqueraders who went from bar to bar—and the less drumming there was, the more drinking." In 1863, a letter to the paper complained that masked celebrants "got up to mischief that would never have been thought of in previous years." Inflated pig's bladders stuffed with flour and powder were thrown at the heads of onlookers, with women's rooms being particularly targeted.[4]
>
> (Suter 1985: 389)

The *Kappelijoch* lantern of 1858 used the easily recognized image of the guardhouse on the Middle Bridge, proposed for demolition, as an allegory for the slow pace of change in civic politics (Plate 10a):

Will's alti G'setz und s'Käppelijoch	The old guard, like the old guard tower,
Trotz allem Ärger blibe doch,	To spite us all still clings to power,

Yet in spite of the explicit political commentary of many Fasnacht processions, Fasnacht supporters could always retreat behind the excuse that "it's all in fun," as Jacob Maehly did in 1856:

E Schellekappe-n-uf wisem Haupt,	A jester's cap on a wise man's head
E Künigskron uf-em Narrehaupt,	A king's crown on a fool's,
Im Gsicht e Maske—vor der Seel—	Bare-faced or hidden behind a mask—
War isch vo beide besser? Wähl!	Which is better? You got to choose!
D'Wahl isch nit schwer—drum nur kei Wall	The choice is clear—that's why we all
Entgege freiem Carneval.	Vote for the freedom of carnival.
Dä isch jo nit der gfährligst Narr,	'Cause the fool who shows the cap he wears
Wo trait se Kappe-n-offebar! [. . .]	Isn't the one you have to fear!

(Meier 1992: 54)

As Fasnacht gained purchase among the liberal bourgeoisie and sufficient support on the city's ruling council, the first indications appear that it was serving to integrate the city's immigrants into Basel's political life, much as the processions of the eighteenth century instructed young men in their social roles in the civil society under the *Ancien Regime*. By 1855, it was being described by Basel's own press as a "folk" tradition (Trumpy 1971: 21). Fasnacht clubs offered immigrant Baslers who were excluded from the guilds and honorary societies opportunities for networking and socializing that served their members long past the carnival season. One of the best-known of these, because of the role it was later to play in establishing Fasnacht as the city's premier social event, was the men's social club Quodlibet, established in 1858 for the promotion of amateur theatricals and masquerade balls.

> One cannot speak of a Quodlibet-clique, since Fasnacht activities were only a part of the activities of that association. Rather, there were Quodlibet members, who, in their positions as members of the Gardeners-guild (*Gartnerzunft*) helped to lead and organize the activities of the Fasnacht community.
>
> (Lotz and Löw 1985: 339)

Indeed, the term "clique" first appears at this time in 1858, although "section" and "club" were more frequently employed as terms for Fasnacht groups—showing that for many such groups, participation in carnival was only one part of their larger social activities (Trumpy 1971: 20). Like other cliques, from the City gymnastics association's *Turnerkränzli* (established in 1864) and the Basilisk-clique of young merchants, Quodlibet drew its members primarily from liberal, immigrant middle-class men (Farine 1985: 84). One of its founders, Samuel Baur-Lippe, recalls:

In the year of 1858 I helped to found Quodlibet along with nineteen like-minded friends. [. . .] At our first meeting, we didn't know what to baptize our newly-created child: harmony, friendship, *Thalia* [goddess of theater], etc. No! We wanted to promote music, song, theater, humor, painting, and friendship under all circumstances, but these names didn't include all these activities. "Yeah," I said to my neighbour Musik Fricker, "it's a real *quodlibet* of activities." "That's it," said the group, "that's the right name. Our group should be called Quodlibet"

(Lotz and Löw 1985: 341)[5]

Quodlibet aimed to improve the artistic character of Fasnacht. Its members put energy into developing themes, "playing them out" in the design of large lanterns, matching costumes, satirical verse and associated press coverage. Baur-Lippe had already begun efforts to enhance the artistry of Fasnacht lanterns as early as ten years previously, when he worked on the *L'aimable* train float of 1848. He reminisces about his lantern-building days:

It pained me to see the large cubic lanterns that were first only painted in skimpy black figures. In 1857, my workshop produced the first lanterns covered in linen (the Prussian spiked helmet). Each year, I painted more and larger lanterns. My brother Louis who, like me, was a real friend of Fasnacht, constructed many lanterns in a masterful fashion and was quite respected for his craft. Thus were created the giant *Claquehut* [Napoleonic bicorn hat], Imperial crown, Papal tiara, *Baselstab* [the city's official insignia], *Käppelijoch*, *Deutschmichel* [Gullible Fritz—a term used to mock radicals too closely aligned with German ideas and customs], the Globe, Peter's Penny, and hundreds of other smaller stick- and back-mounted lanterns. [Figures 10.7 and 10.8]

(Baur-Lippe 1985: 272)

Figure 10.7 "Prussian helmet" lantern carried in Morgenstreich, Samuel Baur, ink drawing, 1857. © Chronik Quodlibet/Fasnachts-Comité.

Figure 10.8 Quodlibet procession in 1859, showing reused "Prussian helmet" lantern from 1857, and "Napoleon hat" and "*Käppelijoch*" lanterns of 1858. © Chronik Quodlibet/Fasnachts-Comité.

Quodlibet, in collaboration with the liberal press, fought all attempts to forbid, restrict or regulate the events, all the while aiming to rein in developments under their control (Trumpy 1971: 21). This period of active political engagement in Fasnacht also saw significant changes in the city's form and infrastructure. In the 1860s, modernization of Basel began in earnest with the demolition of the city's walls, gates and towers, and the passage of the sanitation laws between the cholera epidemic of 1855 and a typhus epidemic ten years later. The city towers and its surrounding walls were demolished, a process that took over a dozen years and created new districts, relieved overcrowding and accommodated new railroads and sewage systems (Figure 10.9). This was the period of bourgeois ascendancy in Basel, which was formalized in 1881 with their accession to political power. Only then do we see the next level of the politically disenfranchised—the working class—begin their efforts to build up social and political organizations and to this end, they too used Fasnacht.

One prominent and noteworthy aspect in Fasnacht's political critique was its attitude to religion. Assuming a particularly virulent tone in the twenty years between 1860 to 1880, when Catholic and liberal factions in Swiss national politics were pitted against each other in the so-called "culture wars," Fasnacht criticism of religious authorities—first Catholic and later Evangelical—continued until the close of the nineteenth century. The parade of 1861 for example, on a theme of "Italian unification," featured paraders costumed as Garibaldi (on the right) and Pope Pius IX (on the left) flanking Emperor Napoleon III and Empress Eugénie, along with Jesuits and other political figures, "his Holiness blowing on his staff of office like a piccolo" (Gantner 1969: 28) (see Plate 10b).

In 1865, the pope's encyclical *Quanta cura* and its associated "Syllabus of Errors" were lampooned with a lantern in the form of a papal tiara (Figure 10.10). The syllabus, proclaimed in late 1864, was especially incendiary to those agitating for political representation. It was an indictment of 80 "modern errors"—a papal assault directed against the emergence of the Italian Republic. Paraders in this procession were again costumed as Jesuits and monks, which resulted in a police inquiry for transgressing the prohibition on wearing religious habits in Fasnacht parades. A similar procession the following year used a lantern in the shape of the earth to poke fun at the pope's next encyclical, *Seminary for Native Clergy*. This time however, the paraders were prudently costumed as dancing "heathens"[6] (Gantner 1969: 28) (Figures 10.11 and 10.12).

As the Catholic church struggled to maintain its authority against the rise of elected and increasingly anti-clerical states across Europe, it continued to be a source of Fasnacht ridicule until the end of the century. While the subjects that received Fasnacht "treatment" were ostensibly foreign, the city's Catholics and its institutionally entrenched Reformed Church hierarchy had no doubt that the targets were religion and authority in general, with the consequences that protests were lodged and anti-clerical themes were subject to fines. Nevertheless, in 1869, the Steinlemer clique depicted Jesuits and a nun serenading Napoleon III and Empress Eugénie followed by an African train-bearer, developing their theme on the spat between France and the Archbishop of Algiers (Meier 1985: 137). In 1870, the Basilisk-clique—made up of members from the Young Merchants Union—took up the cause after the First Vatican Council's enunciation of papal

Figure 10.9 Bird's-eye view of Basel after demolition of its walls, lithograph by Jean Baptiste Arnout, *c.*1865. SABS, Bild Wack. C 80.

Figure 10.10 Quodlibet procession on the subject "The Papal Encyclical" with a lantern in the form of a papal tiara. Niclaus Strübin, 1865. © Chronik Quodlibet/ Fasnachts-Comité.

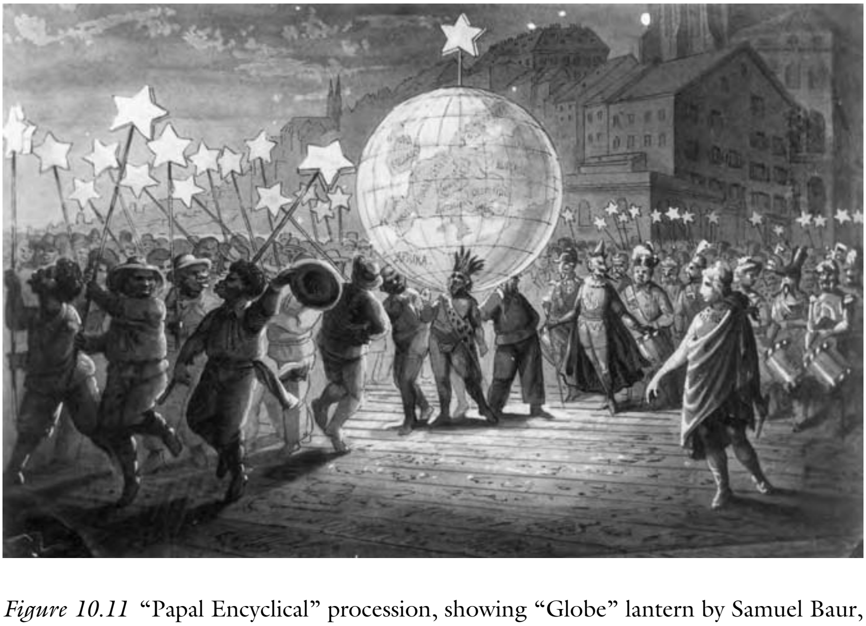


Figure 10.11 "Papal Encyclical" procession, showing "Globe" lantern by Samuel Baur, 1866, SABS, Bild 16, 40.

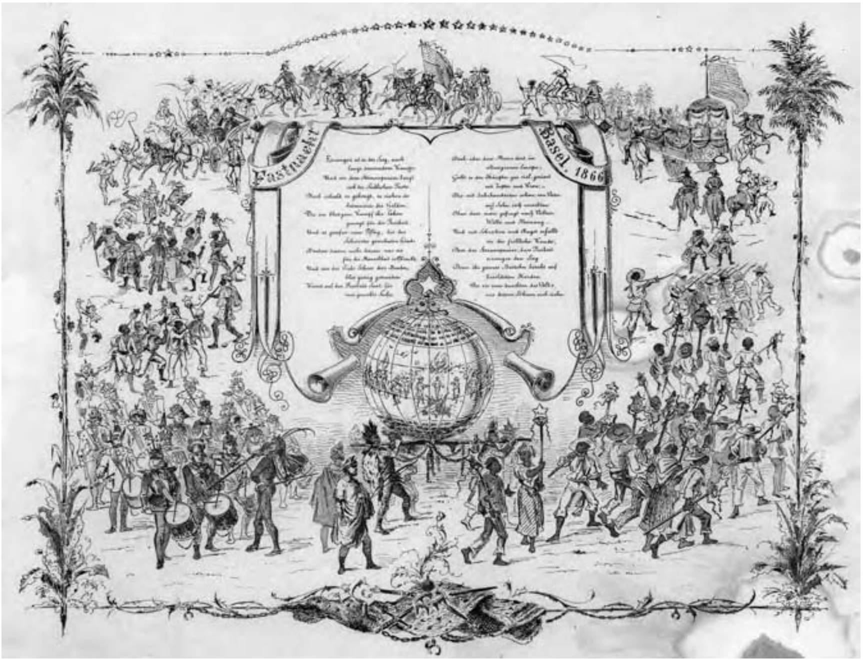


Figure 10.12 *Fasnachts-zeedel* for Quodlibet procession on the papal encyclical, 1866. SABS, Bild 16, 11.

infallibility, with their "Council-procession" of that year (Meier-Kern 1997: 55). The text of their fly-sheet was reprinted in the satirical Fasnacht newspaper *Basler Narrenzeitung* (*Basel Fools-paper*):

Juchhe! Wie bunt ist nun mein Stühlchen	My little throne is oh so cute
Mit Lappen roth und blau geschmückt!	In red and blue rags it's a hoot!
Wie ward so munter mein Concilchen	I wish my council weren't so down
Von Ost und Süd und Nord beschickt.	They're getting grief from all around.
Nur Eins macht mir noch Herzeleid:	Just one thing gives me a chill
Wie wird's mit der Unfehlbarkeit?	Aren't I still infallible?

(*BN* No. 2, 1870)

The "Peter's Penny" lantern of that year extended the attack to the Catholic tithe, showing Saint Peter's cathedral surrounded by carnival fools. The inscription around the border of the penny ran:

Whole countries go without in the name of Catholic honour,
The people gotta pay, who asks them if they wanna?
In Rome the Council's happy to be scarfing down the loot,

Delightedly debauched, they just don't give a toot.
Council patriarchs rave that the world's going fast
And threaten excommunication like feeble farts of gas.
To spout a lot of garbage takes a heap of coins today
But with St Peter's penny, the people get to pay.[7]

When the papal legate complained to the Swiss national assembly that Basel's Fasnacht had greviously ridiculed and insulted the Catholic religion, the police investigated the Basilisk-clique's procession (Koelner 1939: 137). The court determined that the parade leader, dressed as the pope, had been surrounded by bishops and cardinals in religious habits and followed by Capuchin monks, Jesuits and nuns, all of which contravened the regulation prohibiting the wearing of religious habits in Fasnacht processions (Figure 10.13). Even worse, the clique's goal was determined to have been the "ridicule of Catholic spirituality and religious activities," and group leaders and participants were fined accordingly (SABS, SPA, F 9a, 1870).[8] Two of the clique's leaders were fined 30 francs each and eight of the participants were collectively fined 100 francs. Nine were released without a fine (Lotz and Löw 1985: fig. 500).

Figure 10.13 The Basilisk-clique in the costumes of their "Vatican Council" procession, 1870. Colored photograph. SABS, BS 16, 38.

The city's institutionalized Evangelical Church was subject to similar Fasnacht ridicule in an attempt to disrupt its hegemony. The *Basler Narrenzeitung* issued during the Fasnacht season of 1876 instructs us on the "natural history of fools," offering the following description of *Narrus Mukerosus*, the "god-fearing fool:"

> [he's] a hypocrite behind a mask of sanctity, a Jesuit's beard in Protestant clothes . . . His moral conduct outside the house seems pious and simple. He never goes to the theater, because it's the Devil's playground. Now and then, he's to be found at [Carnival] balls, with his pockets full of tracts.
>
> (Weidkuhn 1969: 51)

The *genus* name of this particular fool derives from *mucken*, the German word for "faint protest." The implication is that while Protestants occasionally live up to their name and "protest" injustice, they do so only half-heartedly and ineffectually. The target is the contradiction between the Evangelicals' social programs and their practice of it in the political arena. Of course, Basel's working classes had direct experience with the Evangelical church through its urban mission, established in 1859 with the dual goals of ministering to Basel's burgeoning working-class population and combating liberal theology. The mission's archives shed light on the religious feelings of working-class immigrants and on the conditions in which they lived. When asked why they missed Sunday services, workers complained that their "recognized Christian" bosses made them work Sundays and that they couldn't afford churchgoing clothes (Schaffner 1972: 103). A missionary reports on his visits to a working-class household:

> I found him shaving himself Sunday morning . . . as with most of them, in this house there was no talk of attending services . . . In the four families I visited this Sunday morning, there was little feeling of a Sunday. The men had risen late; of the women, one was washing the children's clothes and another cleaning the kitchen . . . Instead of being at church, they were at work.
>
> (cited in Schaffner 1972: 106)

Some workers saw the missionaries' Sunday house visits as a form of policing, with predictably unpleasant results,

> "Church-going doesn't make people better," said one woman, whose five sons all withdrew from the church, as she "cold-bloodedly told" the missionary. Some refused the church's authority, or preferred to spend their time in nature, seeing churchgoers as hypocrites. Many . . . ascribed their aversion . . . to their doubts about the Bible—its unscientific nature and its contradictions.
>
> (Schaffner 1972: 108, 110)

In 1879, the *Basler Narrenzeitung* turned its satirical wit on the city's foreign mission, a world-famous enterprise dear to the hearts of the city's evangelical elite. Under the heading "*Mission-närrisches*" (Mission-idiocy), they revealed it as a ruthlessly capitalist operation beneath its religious trappings (Weidkuhn 1969: 56):

> In the heathen lands, fantastic workshops can be established which rent out for a pretty penny since the "worker question" isn't as developed there as it is at home . . . Naturally the head of the operation will be a brother in the lord, either a Christian stove-fitter or a pious cobbler or a holy locksmith. The workers are baptized heathens with their wages waiting for them in heaven. So you see, dear reader, it's great—the earnings, the factory, the work, everything. The only problem is the number of baptized. In 1877, we saved 515 souls. We needn't discuss our losses. China . . . has a population of 400 million. If we reach 130 new brothers in Christ each year, the Basel Mission will have 3,076,979 years of work ahead of us before China's completely Christian.
>
> (*BN* No. 3, 1879)

Fasnacht institutionalized as an element of civic identity 1870–1910

Basel's exclusion of immigrants from its political and social institutions during its years of industrialization left them to their own devices to establish social networks in their new home. As a result, in the years between 1850 and 1880 Basel's middle-class immigrants established a great number of new convivial societies in culture, politics, religion, athletics and their other shared interests, along with society bulletins and newspapers. In many cases, these societies modeled themselves after the elite guilds, honorary corporations, cultural and scientific societies. When, in 1874, revisions to the federal constitution extended the vote to all Swiss men and offered new freedoms in work and trades and the secularization of marriages, birth and death certificates, Basel's guilds and corporations finally lost their hold on city politics. Still, they served social and cultural functions for the former elites, and retained their exclusive character.

Many of these new social and cultural societies participated in Fasnacht, effectively adopting this festival and making it their own (Bürgi 1998: 23). Fasnacht played a significant role in providing not only a space for conviviality among this social stratum of immigrant Baslers, but it also provided a public platform for promoting liberal and progressive ideas that were critical of the status quo and focused on contemporary issues. In short, it offered middle-class immigrants one way into urban society. From the 1840s to the 1880s, Basel's middle class were by far the most active participants in Fasnacht, as the elites had withdrawn from participation in public aspects of the event, and city's working class had neither the time nor the resources to contribute to the event. Furthermore, participation in a clique often required residence in a district

(Rebmann 2006). After 1870, the first cliques dedicated exclusively to Fasnacht began to appear. Some of these kept the names of their districts, such as *Santihanslemer*, *Hardsträsslemer* and *Vereinigte Kleinbasler* (Fischer 1985: 124). Others coined new names for themselves, such as Little Basel's *Turnerverein Jenseits* (Gymnastics Club from Over There), which began its Fasnacht activities under the name of Olympia-clique. These societies were loosely structured, as we see from an advertisement placed by the Steinlemer-clique in the *Basler Nachrichten* (Basel News) in 1870, telling members that the procession would "take place today and a good turnout was expected." Often, cliques were not indicated by name in the newspapers; instead, they were described by the subject they addressed in that year's procession. For example, the *Schweizerischer Volksfreund* (Swiss People's Friend) wrote of the "Muzzle-lawyers" (*Maulkorbgesetzlern*), whose subject the "Muzzle law" alluded to a controversial penalty bill for members of the German Imperial Parliament. Another example was a reference to the "Vaccination-Parade" (*Impzwangszug*) which addressed the subject of mandatory inoculation for newborns (Fischer 1985: 123). In the 1870s, local issues predominated as subjects, such as the city's water supply, street widening and straightening, the introduction of sewage lines, construction of new city bridges, the opportunity for a central market, and the production of fake wine in Basel. (Fischer 1985: 132). The occasional parade addressed regional or national subjects, such as the question of reunification, the Germanification of Alsace-Lorraine, or the *Waffenplatz* dispute between the two rural districts of Liestal and Aarau (Plate 10c).

In the late 1870s, Quodlibet began to invite wider participation from other societies and the unions in its parades. This step would gradually transform Fasnacht yet again, widening its base of support to encompass the city's working-class inhabitants, particularly in the last decade of the nineteenth century. By 1880, the balance of political power had swung decidedly to the left. In 1881, the progressives took control of Basel's Great Council for the first time, forming a unified front against the conservatives. There is no doubt at this time that Fasnacht was their event. Prior to the electoral win of 1881, Fasnacht groups rarely made fun of the city's political leadership directly. Rather, they targeted the Catholic church and foreign leaders as representatives of undemocratic forms of government. However, with the electoral success of the left and Quodlibet's encouragement of broader participation in their events, Fasnacht's overt political criticism sharpened further, as a greater segment of the population took part. The targets were, as one might expect, the city's elite families, industrialists and capitalists, as well as religious authorities of all stripes—but increasingly the Evangelical as well as the historically favored Catholics (who by then were making up an increasing percentage of the city's inhabitants). From the *Basler Narrenzeitung* of 1881:

> The aristocrats with pigtails bouncing on their backs aren't the worst! Much more despicable are the politico-religious pigtails that sag dispiritedly from

> the Pietists, who run around scraping up the manna that falls from heaven and want to ship our poorer brothers off to the Lord. And the meanest of all has got to be the upward gazing, head-in-the-clouds cultured pigtails of the Pharisees of knowledge, who swirl their precious words around in the mouth like wine-tasters, savouring the heady perfume of their spirit and congratulating themselves that they're not like the "rough ignorant folk." It isn't hard to be honorable when you have your daily soup, two kinds of meat and fresh vegetables, and it's easy to ridicule those beneath you when you're comfortably situated above them.
>
> (cited in Weidkuhn 1971)

The sharp criticism barred no holds. In the Fasnacht newspaper *Basler Lälli* of 1891, was printed the "International Confession of Faith":

> "I believe in *Capital* almighty, the master of bodies and souls. I believe in *Profit*, his only begotten son, and in *Credit*, the holy spirit, who comes through him and in him is worshipped and glorified. I believe in *Gold* and *Silver* that, melted in bars, struck into pieces, and minted in coins, comes ringing into the world but, descending to earth, becomes difficult to find, is taken down into the cellar of the bank, to rise again as *Paper Money.*" In this spirit, the poem continues, believing in rent, eviction notices, public debt that guarantees private capital from risk, and private property ("the fruit of the work of others"), the necessity of neediness, the eternal life of the wage-system ("that frees the worker from all concerns about his possessions"), the extension of the working day, the non-payment of wages and the adulteration of products. The confession closes with these words, "I believe in the holy dogma: buy cheap and sell dear, and in the foundations of our all holy church, the Orthodox National Economy. Amen!"
>
> (*Basler Lälli* 1891, No. 3 cited in Weidkuhn 1971: 79)

Another excerpt, also from *Basler Lälli* in 1907, lampooned the city's elite families, lending a personal tone to the political critique:

Still lebt in unsrer Stadt dahin	In modern Basel there are men
Herr VonderParaSarelin	Like Herr VonderParaSarelin,
Er wohnt gewöhnlich in der Dalben,	Who lives in Basel's finest square,
Doch Häuser hat er allenthalben.	Though he has houses everywhere.
Als vornehm grüsst er ziemlich kühl	His comments are not numerous
Und ist verwandt mit Vonder Mühll,	But his relatives voluminous:
Schlumberger, Vischer, Paravici,	Schlumberger, Vischer, Paravici,
Bachofe, Gigy und Companie,	Bachofen, Von der Mühll, Geigy,
Mit Furget, Burget, Werthema,	Burckhardt, Werthemann, Furget,
Und Gimesees, etcetera . . .	Gimesees, and there's more still yet . . .
Herr VonderParaSarelin,	Herr VonderParaSarelin,
Auch er kennt dieses Lebens Müh'n:	Who knows what effort he puts in,

Vor elf Uhr pflegt er aufzustehn,	To wake each day by eleven o'clock
Um seine Coupons nachzusehn	To keep an eye on rising stock.
Im Tresor auf der Handelsbank-	His safety box in the commerce bank-
Sie sind in Ordnung—Gott sei Dank!	It's all in order—God be thanked!
Und da er hilft, wo er nur kann,	And there he helps, as best he can,
Stellt nachmittags er seinen Mann	By setting up his trusty man
An der Ersparniskasse Schalter,	To serve the bank as savings teller
als kleiner Leute Geldverwalter.	And take the money of the little feller.

(cited in Weidkuhn 1971: 79)

The name VonderParaSarelin is assembled from the patrician family names Von der Mühll, Paravicini, Sarasin und Iselin, to poke fun at the closed world of Basel's intermarrying elites.

In 1884, Quodlibet announced their intention to award prizes to the cliques with the best subjects, substantial sums that they would announce at their annual masquerade ball at the Burgvogtei Hall in Little Basel. One immediate consequence was a proliferation of new cliques, greatly widening participation in the event, although many of these lasted only a year or two. From 1880 to the turn of the century, around ten to fifteen associations took part in Fasnacht as one aspect of their social activities (Baur-Lippe 1985: 339; Fischer 1985: 123).[9] To pay for the ever-more elaborate processions, cliques formed *Hauskollekten* to raise money, primarily through the sale of Fasnacht "stock" with prizes awarded to winning numbers, a practice that was viewed by the authorities as "burdensome Fasnacht betting" (Fischer 1985: 146; Lotz and Löw 1985: 339). Increasingly, Quodlibet and their counterpart in Little Basel, the *Würzengraber-Kämmerli*, took on the primary responsibility of collecting and distributing funds. This institutionalization of Fasnacht financing further increased and broadened participation. In 1889, Quodlibet collected 4,000 francs which it divided between participating processions. It also supported the establishment of a home for wayward girls, entering a field in which its religious opponents had long trodden (Weidkuhn 1969: 52). In 1891, they collected donations for the unemployed and in 1899, they allocated Fasnacht profits to eleven social projects in the city. In 1905, the city government awarded Quodlibet and the Würzengraber-Kämmerli the exclusive right to collect for Fasnacht, banning all other public fundraising by cliques. The following year, the two committees were merged. In 1909, the united committee collected subsidies of nearly 12,000 francs, and two years later, under the new name of the Fasnachts-Comité, it sold medallions to finance the event and produced the first printed guides.

With the widening of Fasnacht to encompass many sectors of society, it served as a precursor to mass society. By the early twentieth century, as political power in the city definitively shifted, first to the middle and later to the working class, Fasnacht is institutionalized as an element in civic identity, and the city is reconfigured around its parade routes, Fasnacht cellars and a sense among its inhabitants that it is more "progressive" than other Swiss cities:

> Their newly acquired membership in Basel establishment allowed the creators of the new Fasnacht to win over ever-larger segments of the population. And this pointed towards an increasing diversification in the kinds of people who participated in the event. Members of the city's elite began to participate in events organized by the Fasnachts-Comité, and at the same time, members of the working classes and other subcultures formed their own Fasnacht groups.
>
> (Bürgi 1998: 24)

Prior to 1880, Basel's working class had little political clout (Pfister 1976, Gysin-Scholer 1997). Although the first strikes in the ribbon and dye industry occurred in 1868, along with the first establishment of worker's credit unions and health funds, it wasn't until the final decades of the nineteenth century that Basel's working class began to organize—as had the immigrant middle classes forty years earlier—with discussions and efforts at coordination between the German Worker's Union, German Social Democratic membership, the *Grütliverein* (a nationalistic Swiss worker's union founded in Geneva in 1838), and the *Posamenterverein* (Basel's textile workers) (Degen 1986: 30–42). One result was an explosion of new unions and associations in each trade and sphere of activity: construction and wood workers (1886), German masons (1887), stonecutters (1889), Italian masons (1892), carpenters, parquet-floor layers, painters (all 1888). By the beginning of the 1890s, numerous splinter and sub-associations had formed, in the trade unions for sculptors, longshoremen, parquet-floor layers, lathe operators and chimney sweeps, shoemakers (1886), tailors (1888), hairdressers (1888), women dressmakers (1891), brewers (1895), bakers (1888) cigar-makers (1889), butchers, millers, garden workers, transport workers (1887), conductors (1889), and in 1896, the general *Worker's Union of the General Association of Consumers.* In heavy industry, new unions were established for women textile workers (1887), dyers (1888) and the Swiss textile worker union (1896). Not surprisingly, such a blossoming of working-class associations led to a similar proliferation of working-class newspapers, with vivid mastheads like the *Basel Worker's Friend: Organ of the Workers' Union and the Social Democratic Party of Basel* and the *Basel House Friend: Illustrated Weekly for Entertainment, Education and the Betterment of the people* (Degen 1986: 32). It also led to strikes, work actions, shut downs and lock outs.

Changes to civic government followed quickly. In 1889, the city's constitution was revised to allow for popular election of the government and of the courts, and in the general election of 1893, the first socialist candidate was elected to the city's Great Council. By the election three years later, the Great Council had a majority of progressive members: seventy Free-thinkers, forty-two Conservatives, eleven Social Democrats, four centrists and three Catholics. In the general election of 1902, the last to use the majority system, the Social Democrats gained a controlling bloc, and in 1911 the church and state were formally separated. The larger context of a newly mobilized working class, coupled with Quodlibet's efforts in institutionalizing funding for Fasnacht cliques, resulted in a significant increase in participation of Basel's working-class population in Fasnacht. In 1886, Quodlibet's masquerade ball was large enough for it to rent Greater Basel's largest assembly hall, the City Casino. Newspaper notices from 1887 show cliques advertising their planning meetings in local bars, cafés and restaurants (Fischer 1985: 124).

Fasnacht subjects in this period maintained their political edge, addressing topics from the local to the international—such as an incident in 1888, when insulting references to Germany in the "Vive la France" *zeedel* led the German government to complain to the Swiss parliament. The author responsible was fined 800 francs and required to pay court costs (Fischer 1985: 133). The records of the *Vereinigte Kleinbasler* (United Little Baslers) in these years gives some idea of the more political Fasnacht subjects, since they were founded from a merger of the Little Basel Drummers Union and the Basel Trade Union. Their "Mahdi-Rebellion" and "Congo-Conference" themes of 1885 addressed European colonization in Africa with seven wagons representing among other items, the besieged city of Khartoum and the Basel Mission's most famous export, the doctor Albert Schweizer. In 1886, the "Alcohol-Question" (*Alkoholfrage*) Parade involved a number of wagons, including the "Devil's distillery," a mock-burial of the "last schnapps-tippler," a Bacchus-wagon, etc. Their "National Drugstore" (*Staatsapotheke*) theme of 1890 addressed a recently defeated bill for health insurance, featuring a lantern in the form of a funerary monument lantern depicting politicians and city council members under the motto: "The Sick Law is buried, now we can Rest In Peace." In 1891, the *Hie Helgoland* lantern in the form of a Prussian helmet spoofed Germany's claims on Zanzibar with the motto "*Klein aber mein*" (Tiny but mine); while in the "Panama Parade" of 1893, a depiction of the French President Carnot led to complaints from the French consul and envoy in Bern.[10] The intervention of the Swiss federal judiciary and an apology from the Swiss federal parliament resolved the incident. In 1899, Quodlibet hosted a "Disarmament procession" addressing the peace manifesto of Tsar Nicholas, and in 1900, the Vereinigte Kleinbasler ushered in the new century with their "End of the World" (*Weltuntergang*) Parade, featuring a lantern in the form of a celestial observatory (Löw 1985: 405; VKB 2006) (Figure 10.14).

By the turn of the century, the Fasnachts-Comité began to represent the event as a characteristic feature of the city. Press accounts praised every clique's freedom to form its own procession and choose its own route as an expression of the "Basel character." This development was influenced by the fact that the representatives of the middle class now ran the city government. They interpreted this cultural event, originally created by and for a specific middle-class immigrant culture, as a central, "typical" element of the city's culture. They pointed to the "old tradition" of Fasnacht and its roots in Basel's society (Bürgi 1998: 24).

This period witnesses a rise in scholarship on the history of Fasnacht as a folk tradition which is rooted in medieval Swiss and Germanic carnival (e.g.

Figure 10.14 "Blackboard" [*Schiefertafel*] lantern of a youth wing of the Santihans-clique, ridiculing a controversial civil court election, *c.*1900. © Fasnachts-Comité

Hoffmann-Krayer 1896). Such "invention of tradition" was part of a more widespread interest in "folklore" and "regional" cultures that takes place across Europe in the era of emerging nationalism (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1992). That such a re-positioning of Fasnacht as a folk practice was successful, is clear from its increasing profile outside of the city. While Basel in the middle of the nineteenth century was represented in the festivals of Zurich by bankers (as in 1851), or a guild wagon accompanied by Little Basel's three traditional mascots of lion, wild man and griffin (as in 1853), by 1888 Zurich guilds chose to represent Basel with a Fasnacht clique in their "folk festivals and Swiss cantons" theme, during their city's annual Six Bells Festival (Gantner 1971: 63). This is one indication of the growing institutionalization of Fasnacht. In 1885, some voices suggested that Basel should celebrate its Fasnacht on the same day as elsewhere in Switzerland and form a united procession instead of individual ones. The *Swiss People's Friend* expressed the opposite view, "the Basler character demands smaller, individual processions" (Trümpy 1971: 21). When the decision was made to keep the later date, it was ultimately justified on the basis that it would bring more tourists and the associated revenues to Basel if it were held at a different time than carnival in other Swiss and German cities (Christen 1984: 11).

And with the additional participation of working-class Baslers in the event, the tone of class-struggle continued until 1927. "From a political perspective," writes Weidkuhn:

> Fasnacht critique was directed against the conservatives, who called themselves liberals after 1902 (and from whom today's liberal-Democrats are descended), and against all those who wanted to carry over remnants of the former Basel ruling classes and religious orthodoxy.

Yet in time, the elites returned as well, for the primary reason that "the conservative-liberal, positive-protestant, bourgeois-old capitalist Basel had become increasingly on the defensive since 1881 and was thus in an excellent position for Fasnacht participation—the oppositional one" (Weidkuhn 1971: 80, 81). Thus, conservatives and reactionaries also turn to Fasnacht—but in their case, to protest the political ascendancy of the progressives and radicals—the first instance occurring after the conservative election losses of 1881. In a Fasnacht newspaper of that year, the conservatives assuaged their electoral losses by publishing satirical verses and caricatures of the progressives, comparable to those published by the radicals against the establishment forty years earlier (Weidkuhn 1969: 61). In 1884, a journalist declared that the Fasnacht paper *Joggeluner* had incited a great deal of anger and caused great damage to the most respected liberals in the city, probably referring to the liberal-conservative central caucus of the Safran party (Weidkuhn 1969: 54). By the 1920s, Fasnacht's previously leftist orientation was augmented by populist, reactionary and in some cases aggressively xenophobic sentiments: for example, the *Sans-Gêne* clique's "Jewification of the world" theme in the 1920s. Yet, satire directed at Catholics gradually reduced, as their numbers increased to nearly a third of all inhabitants in the city and they began to form their own Fasnacht organizations (Pfister 1976; Meier-Kern 1997: 15–16, 61–6):

> The liberal Eduard Fritz Knuchel, ruminating on Fasnacht in 1937, suggested that . . . anyone who couldn't make headway in party politics or class struggles could resort to Fasnacht.
>
> (Weidkuhn 1969: 55)

> In summary, one can say that Basel's Fasnacht was, up to a few decades ago a festival for the lower strata of society, those who had little or no opportunity to influence the political process, who were economically disadvantaged, uneducated and had no positive relationship to the Protestant religion of the ruling elites. It was a festival of the socially disenfranchised and not-yet franchised, the festival of emigrants estranged from their own traditions they left behind and closed out of the ones in their new home, sociologically speaking, a Pariah-cult. In short, it was a festival of leftist society.
>
> (Weidkuhn 1971: 81)

And this sheds light on the unique quality of Fasnascht—an event constitutive of Basel identity yet created by *refusés*—and it helps to explain its defiantly anarchic sensibility that had persisted through the twentieth century. At last, the annual procession through the city's streets, accompanied by the visual allegories of the giant lanterns and rhetorical exhortations in the *zeedels*, *Schnitzelbänke* and newspapers, included all segments of Basel society: the middle class, the working class and, in a curious irony, even the elites who had shunned the event for seventy years. While Fasnacht was no substitute for the organs of a democratic society—the institutions of government, education, culture, welfare and a public press—it did influence all of these. Its impact is felt throughout the city. It may not be the more familiar, visible, form that bourgeois society erected on the traces of Vienna's former walls—a Ringstrasse with its Parliment, Museums, Opera, Theater, University, Churches, and Barracks—but it is a temporary urbanism just discernable beneath the city's urban fabric, made up of hundreds of associations, clubs and splinter groups that participate in Fasnacht each year, meeting in their clique-cellars and running educational programs, drumming schools, lessons in public speaking and social events. Each February, in the dead of winter, this deeply rooted sense of the city bursts like a strange and beautiful mushroom, exploding into the light and sending its spores out once again, in a pattern of constant renewal.

Notes

All translations are by the author, unless otherwise noted.

1 Inspired by Enlightenment ideas after the short-lived Helvetian Republic, Basel's elite founded numerous learned societies in the years 1800 and 1832: the *Naturforschende Gesellschaft* (Society for the Advancement of Scientific Research), 1817; *Freie Akademische Gesellschaft* (Independent Academic Society), 1834; *Historische Gesellschaft* (Historical Society), 1836; *Kunstverein* (Art Association), 1839; *Antiquarische Gesellschaft* (Antiquarian Society), 1842; *Lesegesellschaft* (Literary Society), *Gemeinützige Gesellschaft* (Public Welfare Society) (Gossmann 2000: 63).

2 The Lälli-King was the namesake of the Lälli-clique, established 1902.

3 The large parade of 1853 was supported with the sale of Fasnacht-stock, promoted here in verse for a Fasnacht newspaper (cited in Fischer 1985: 147):

Heute thun wir avertieren,	With this advert we are telling
Dass wir Aktien kreieren,	You of certain stocks we're selling,
Sie zu 5 Francs stipulieren	If you've 5 Francs for proffering
Und sie hiemit offerieren,	You can purchase our stock offering.
Hoffend, dass sie acceptieren;	Hoping that by now you're learning,
Denn, um sie zu amüsieren	That to keep Fasnacht returning,
Müssen wir nun rekurrieren	We simply must keep yearning
An Ihr Beutel appelieren.	That you'll cough up hard-won earnings.
Viel ist noch zu arrangieren,	There still lots of work that's waiting,
Herzustellen, dekorieren,	Getting set up, and creating,
Auszuschmücken und garnieren,	Ornamenting, decorating,

Was das ganze soll verzieren	Making everything just dashing
Soll der Fasching recht florieren.	So that Fasching will be smashing.
Darum thun Sie acquirieren	Thus by now you should be getting
Aktien, die wir gerieren;	Fasnacht stocks that we're here "splitting":
Nichts ist dabei zu riskieren,	Without risking there's no gaining
Als das Ganze zu verlieren.	Don't you want Fasnacht remaining?
Wer uns drum will soutenieren,	If you wish to help us meeting
Möge sich jetzt nicht genieren;	Our goals, it's not by retreating.
Nur wenn viel wir debitieren,	Only when we're really owing
Kann die Fastnacht reüssieren.	Fasnacht can have its best showing.

4 Natalie Zemon Davis discusses at some length the misogynistic aspects of carnival throughout early modern Europe (Davis 1987).

5 The term comes from Latin for "what-you-will," and in medieval Germany, *it* referred to ridiculous lists of items combined under an absurd theme. A Fasnacht procession in 1835 paraded under the title "A Humoristic-Satyrical Quodlibet."

6 *Meridionali Americae* (On The Seminary For Native Clergy), papal encyclical promulgated by Pius IX on September 30, 1865.

7 *Um zu gehorchen, ganze Länder darben, Beisteuern muss das Volk, wer fragt, ob's mag?*
In Rom verschlingt s'Concilium die Garben, Genussvoll prassend schon an einem Tag.
Die Väter am Concil, die Welt verfluchend rasen, Doch gleicht ihr Bannesheil kaum schwachen Seifenblasen
Das leere Stroh zu dreschen bedarfs wohl vieles Gold, Doch mit dem Peterspfenning bezahlt das Volk denSold.

(Meier-Kern 1997: 55)

8 In April 1870, the cantonal governments of Basel Diocese closed the seminaries for priests and forbade the promulgation of the Vatican Council decrees. When the bishop Eugène Lachat nonetheless proclaimed the decrees the following year and tried to exclude priests opposing the doctrine of infallibility, the lines were drawn between civil and ecclesiastical authorities. In 1873, Lachat was deposed by the cantonal authorities, along with eighty-four priests who supported him. The bishop went into exile in Lucerne, and Swiss Catholics were forbidden to communicate with him. That year, Lachat was personally targeted for Fasnacht ridicule, leading to a police notice that the paraders avoid provoking Catholic sentiment (Lins 1907; Gantner 1969: 29).

9 *Klub der Namenlosen*, *San-Souci-Club*, *Globus-Clique*, *Sirpfli-Clique*, *Schetty-Clique*, *Jüngere-Unitats-Clique*, *Blaue-Donau-Clique*, *Dambie-Clique*, *Merkur-Clique*, *Hugandi-Clique*, *Gundoldinger-Clique*, *Ching-Hung-Clique*, *Praeda-Clique*, *Landkrons-Clique*.

10 The target was the Panama Canal Scandal, in which the French government was found to have taken bribes not to tell investors that the Panama Canal company was in serious financial trouble. A million francs were lost, 104 legislators were found to have been involved in the corruption, and Jean Jaurés was commissioned by the French parliament to conduct an enquiry into the matter, completed in 1893.

Bibliography

Abbreviations

BN	*Basler Narrenzeitung* (Basel Fools Paper)
SN	*Schweizerische Nationalzeitung* (Swiss National Newspaper)
SABS	Staatsarchiv Basel-Stadt
SPA	Straf- und Polizei-Akten

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Plate 3 Stairs erected by Ercole I d'Este, Palazzo del Corte, Ferrara, 1481. Photograph by author.

Plate 4a Gabriel Bella, The Doge conferring the baton of command on the General of the Seas. On the left the Church of San Marco and the dogal palace, on the right the Logetta and Library frame, through the two columns, the San Marco basin, closed by the Church of San Giorgio. Oil on canvas, before 1782. Venice, Querini Stampalia Foundation.

Plate 4b Gentile Bellini, Procession in Piazza San Marco with the reliquary of the Cross. Oil and tempera on canvas. Venice, Gallerie dell'Accademia (formerly in the Scuola Grande di San Giovanni Evangelista), 1496.

Plate 4c Luca Carlevarijs, The sumptuous regatta organized in honor of Frederick August, Prince Elector of Saxony, May 17, 1716, passing along the *Molo* and the Piazzetta before setting off towards the Grand Canal. In the foreground, the festive barge (*peota*) designed by Alessandro Mauro, representing China led in triumph from Asia. Oil on canvas, *c.*1716. St Petersburg, Hermitage Museum, inv. n. 5538.

Plate 4d Sebastiaen Vranckx, Triumphal entry of the Dogeressa Morosina Morosini Grimani on the *Bucintoro* in San Marco basin; in the distance is the Piazzetta from where she will descend to enter the dogal palace (May 4, 1597). Oil on panel, ca. 1597 Venice, Collezione Tatiana Scarpa.

Plate 4e Luca Carlevarijs, Regatta on the Grand Canal in honor of Frederick IV of Denmark (March 4, 1709). Oil on canvas, *c*.1716. St Petersburg, Hermitage Museum, inv. n. 216

Plate 7a
Interior view of a room with faux-marble decors, constructed on Place Dauphine for a celebration of the marriage of the Dauphin, 1745. From *Fêtes Publiques données par la Ville de Paris, à l'occasion du mariage de Monseigneur le Dauphin, les 23 et 26 février 1745.* Bibliothèque municipale de Versailles, Rés. I 193d, (detail).

Plate 7b
Fireworks display on the Grand Place in Lille, erected to celebrate the birth of the Dauphin in 1729. From Pourchez, C. *Description des réjouissances qui se sont faites en la ville de Lille, le 29 septembre 1729 et jours suivants pour la naissance de Monseigneur le Dauphin.* LML, Manuscrit E 16, Folio 74.

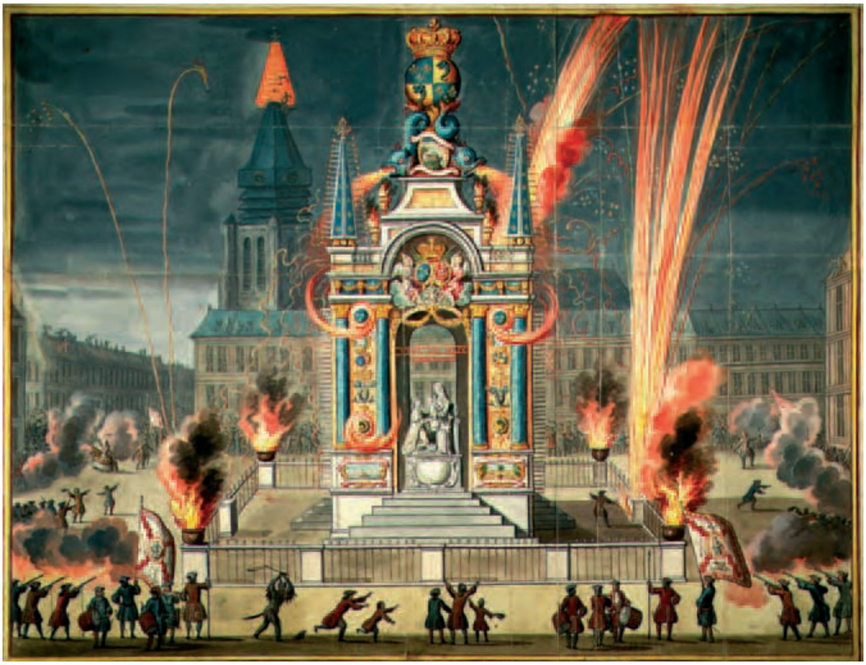

Plate 8a Willem Kromhout, Sketch for canal decoration on the occasion of the 1898 coronation of Wilhelmina, 1897. Water color. With kind permission of the Netherlands Architecture Institute.

Plate 8b View of Herengracht decorations, 1898 from F.H. van Leent and P.J.A.C. van Geldorp, *Haantje de Voorste bij de inhuldigingsfeesten* (Amsterdam: Gebr. Koster). From the author's collection.

Plate 9 “Les Décorations lumineuses de la Seine”.
Renderings by Eugène Beaudouin. *L’Illustration,* May 29, 1937.
Courtesy L’Illustration Multimédia. © 2007 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York/ADAGP, Paris.

Plate 10a The *Käppelijoch* lantern, carried over Basel's Middle Bridge during Morgenstreich, 1858. Gouache painting by Niclaus Strübin, 1858. © Fasnachts-Comité.

Plate 10b Quodlibet parade on the theme of "Italian unification", showing (from left to right) Pope, Napoleon III and empress Eugenie, Garibaldi. Morgenstreich 1861. After a watercolor by Niclaus Strübin in *Quodlibetalbum*. From *d'Basler Fasnacht* (1939), 148–9, © Fasnachts-Comité, Basel.

P*late 10c* Morgenstreich in the 1870s, after a painting by H. Duthaler. Private collection, Basel. From *d'Basler Fasnacht* (1939), 157, © Fasnachts-Comité, Basel.

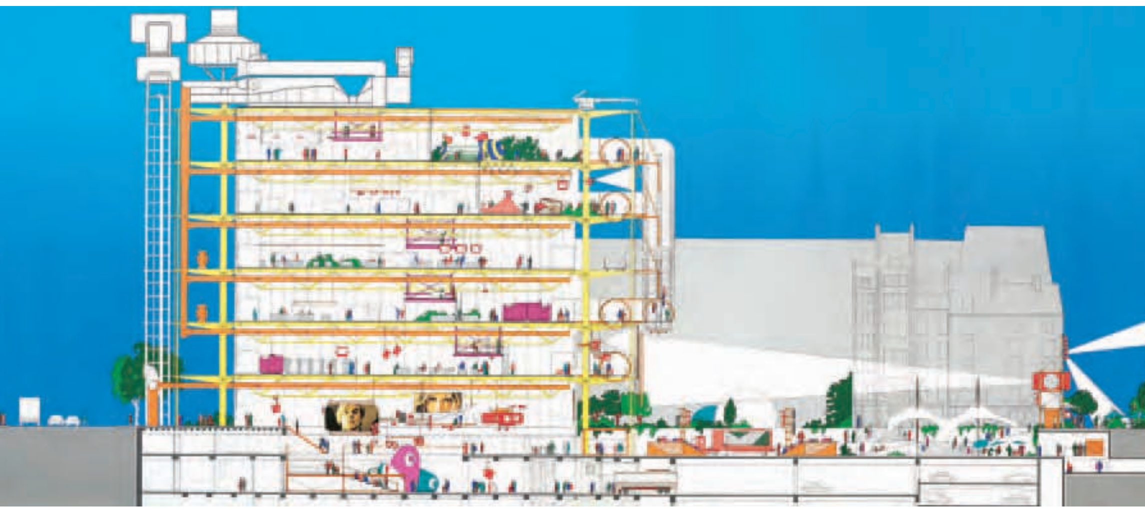

Plate 11 Animated Section for the design competition of the Centre Pompidou. Drawing by Renzo Piano and Richard Rogers, 1970–1. Richard Rogers Partnership.

11

Taking back the street, Paris 1968–78

Sarah Bonnemaison

A man in a suit leaps from a building into the void. We cannot help but imagine the horrible moment when he will crash onto the pavement of the street below (Figure 11.1). In October of 1960, Yves Klein performed the jump at 5 rue Gentiel Bernard, in Fontenay-aux-Roses, a symbolic site for the artist who was Rosacrucian. Klein called the photomontage *Leap into the Void*. For me, this image represents the desire to free oneself from convention and imagine a entirely new society. As a visual allegory, it brings together the physical bravery of the jumper with the urban context of a bourgeois home, juxtaposing future and past to create a statement about breaking with tradition while being aware of what that is. Klein, whose extended body here bridges past and future, shows the necessity of risk-taking in order to invent, imagine and create.

Reflecting on Klein's allegory of 1960, I wonder why the streets of Paris became charged with such political and cultural meaning in the decade that followed. People came to the street to debate ideas about the future of society and they acted on them. For many, this was a leap into the void and the resistance they encountered was fierce. During the spring of 1968, France was paralyzed with strikes, occupations of work places and confrontations with police. Yet unlike earlier revolutions in France, celebration was a major component of this period, supported by a generation anxious to reclaim the right to express collective joy, pleasure and sensuality in public spaces. In this chapter, I trace the celebratory impulse from its radical beginnings to its most established form. I see the origin of this trajectory in the demonstrations of May 1968, which were a spontaneous expression of the revolution as a festival. Environmental theater, performed in marginal spaces such as Les Halles represent an intermediate phase; and at the end of the trajectory, Beaubourg (the cultural center) embodies the most structured form of the celebratory impulse.

Figure 11.1 Saut dans le vide, photomontage by Yves Klein, photographs by Harry Shunk and John Kender, 1960.

Part one—The liminal phase

The impoverishment of everyday life

The years before May 68 saw an increasing disenchantment and malaise about the rapid transformation of Paris. From an urban perspective, Henri Lefebvre believes that the tremendous changes made to Paris in the name of modernity—such as urban zoning, high-rises and new towns built on its periphery—had fragmented the experience of everyday Parisian life into programmed dichotomies such as work and leisure, rural and urban, and private and public (Lefebvre 1991). As a result, even though urban renovations benefited many people, its human costs were high: an impoverished everyday life, the transformation of leisure into a commodity, and the banishment of adventure and real pleasure through the regulation and control of public spaces.

Lefebvre saw this situation dialectically. He looked for solutions not in the traditional model of revolutionary class struggle, but in the new condition of disenchantment with life. He argued that boredom in everyday life—or more accurately, the refusal to be bored—produced new revolutionary forces that were bent on adventure, the satisfaction of real desires and non-productive pleasure. At the time, Lefebvre was a professor of sociology in the new university of Nanterre and he saw a hope for change in the libidinal force of youth that would counteract alienation and the hollow "performance" of social roles with the authentic and playful life of what he called the "total person" (Lefebvre, 1968: 27).

In the predominantly secular context of the late 1960s, a sense of hope for change was found in Marxist theory. As historian Kristin Ross puts it:

> it was a time of triumphant Marxism in large sectors of the workers' movement, in the university in the form of [. . .] small groups of Maoist, Trotskyist, anarchist militants, and in a dominant frame of reference for work conducted in philosophy and the human sciences since World War II.
>
> (Ross 2002: 8)

Marxist theory offered a clear critique with little ambiguity. It viewed society as structured by dualities, such as base and superstructure, rich and poor, private and public, modern and traditional, progressive and reactionary, boring and festive. Jacques Tati's wonderful film *Mon Oncle* is constructed on one of these dualities. It is a comic yet acidic critique of the impoverishment of everyday life in modern Paris during the 1960s. The film draws a contrast between a traditional way of life in a working-class neighborhood, rich in human relations and poor in consumer products, and a modern middle-class house filled with new consumer goods but devoid of human warmth. Through gentle caricature, Tati employed the Marxist paradigm to show the consequences of the worst aspects of capitalism on urban life—that is, alienation, over-consumption and class conflict.

Tati was one of a number of artists and intellectuals who expressed frustration with modern life. People often say that May 68 came from nowhere, but this is incorrect. The commitment to fight for change had its roots in the mobilization against the Algerian War of Independance. That mobilization catalyzed a new kind of opposition, one outside of the established parties that gradually became aware of itself as a movement. Its political opening to "otherness," represented by the two "others" of political modernity—the worker and the colonial subject—was itself the result of that generation's particular historical and political memory inscribed in decolonization (Ross 2002: 25). The fact that the French word for a policeman's truncheon (*matraque*) comes from Arabic (*matraq*) says a great deal about the not-so-distant confrontation between Algerians and French forces of law and order. In 1968 for example, someone said, "the streets thick with police cars—reminds me of the Algerian war" (Ross 2002: 31).

The striking photographs of young men hurling cobblestones and Molotov cocktails at police through clouds of tear gas, endure in popular memory as the drama that took place that spring (Figure 11.2). May 68, as it came to be

Figure 11.2
Rioters throwing pavings stones and Molotov cocktails, Paris, May 1968.

called, saw the largest popular manifestations in France since the end of World War II and the biggest strike ever held in the history of the French worker's movement that brought the country to its knees. Ross reflects critically on the way this period has been remembered by the media as a happy month of "free expression." She argues that:

> the occupation of factories and of universities, like the barricades, reveals class conflict and the relation to the adversary. It is easy to forget the extent to which students were joined by an increasing number of young workers as battles progressed—a group whose role and sheer number has been consistently downplayed.
>
> (Ross 2002: 71)

The enormous quantity of literature on the events of that spring is evidence of their importance in generating a political and cultural turn that, in many ways, have influenced French culture up to this day. Let us now put the idea of revolution as festival to the test.

Revolution as festival

After a lengthy stay abroad, filmmaker Louis Malle returned home and encountered the revolution. His immediate impression was a sense of celebration, an overwhelming feeling that the city had been taken over by a new kind of festival. Malle recalls:

> I came back to Paris on 3 May 1968, after six months in India—which put me in a frame of mind of not being surprised by anything. In fact, I was expecting a difficult return into French life. Instead, I fell into a gigantic wonderful festival: a rebellion of a whole generation against what society had in store for them. I was staying in Odeon and that very night, as I was strolling around the Place Saint Michel with my brother, I got beaten into a pulp by five cops who wanted me "to move on." Of course it immediately secured my position on the side of the students.
>
> (Caron 1993: 13)

At the beginning of that spring, those who participated in university occupations felt a sense of intense and joyful liberation which they experienced as a celebration. In the words of one student:

> we lived the festival, a time of miracles, the liberating power of speech. After we pushed away the night and conquered "the force," we were going to change life, live free at last, equal, brotherly, happy . . . Utopia grew like wild oats between the cobblestones. A soft crazy imagination . . . an interior explosion but also a fabulous liberation.
>
> (Dansette 1971: 147)

Crucial to us here is the unique mixture of celebration and political engagement. Theater historian Laurence Labrouche argues that the interplay between festival and revolution was a major aspect of May. "We could go further," he remarks, "and say that one of the particularities of 1968 was to *conceive of the revolution as a festival*. It is this demand for pleasure that was subversive" (Labrouche 1999: 76, my emphasis) (Figure 11.3). Revolution as festival may have been a new concept, but using festivals for political gain is not. Festivals have always held the threat of eruption into violence. Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie for example, studied in depth the process by which a traditional carnival in the small Provençal town of Romans turned, for a number of years in the sixteenth century, into farmers' revolts (Le Roy Ladurie 1979). Natalie Zemon Davis has also demonstrated this important aspect of festivals in her studies of social life in early modern France. Festivals are not mere safety valves, she argues, "festive life can on the one hand perpetuate certain values of the community (even guarantee its survival) and on the other hand criticize political order" (Davis 1987: 97).

Looking at this duality from the other side, Lefebvre saw celebration in revolution. In his research on the Paris Commune of 1871, he found an eyewitness account which described how a celebration diverted violent reprisals:

Figure 11.3 Climbing for a better view on a statue by Lucien Gibert during a meeting at Charléty Stadium, Paris, May 1968. © Roger-Viollet.

> I had this vision of the Commune as a festival—it's from a diary about the Commune. The person who kept the diary (he was deported, by the way, and brought back his diary from deportation several years later, around 1880) recounts how, on March 28, 1871, the soldiers came to look for the cannons that were in Montmartre and on the hills of Belleville. Now when the women who were up early in the morning heard the noise, they ran out into the streets and surrounded the soldiers, laughing, having fun, greeting them in a friendly way. They went off to make coffee and offered it to the soldiers, and these soldiers, who had come to get the cannons, were more or less carried away by the people. First the women, then the men, everyone came out, in an atmosphere of popular festival. The Commune cannon incident was not at all a situation of armed heroes arriving and combating the soldiers who were trying to take the cannons. It didn't happen at all like that. It was the people who came out of their houses, who were enjoying themselves. The weather was beautiful, March 28th was the first day of spring, it was sunny—the women kissed the soldiers, they're relaxed, and the soldiers were absorbed into all of that, a Parisian popular festival.
>
> (cited in Ross 1997: 76)

It is important to place this story of Lebfevre about celebration as a political tool in its intellectual context, especially with respect to Jean Jacques Rousseau's argument for the value of spontaneous celebrations. Rousseau saw celebrations as having the power to connect each person with the other, creating transparency in human relations. In such a state, "each person is equal to the rest, their awareness of this reciprocity would be the very substance of the gathering. They would celebrate a new transparency: hearts would hide no more secrets, communication would be completely free of obstacles" (Starobinski 1964: 101). For Rousseau, spontaneous celebrations play an important role in forming citizens: a person who rejects theatricality and illusion, and strives for the transparency of hearts brought together in an indivisible community by democratic fervor. In his words, "when the festival is present in men's hearts, theaters are redundant" (cited in Starobinski 1964: 101). In this view, festivals transform people when they are simple and direct. To be transparent, the festive space is stripped of decoration; a simple gathering of people who are excited and aware of their own assembly is what creates the moral impact of the festival.

This philosophical view of celebration became a major reference for much subsequent discussion about the value of festivals. The transparency of Rousseau's ideal festival is constantly set in contrast to its opposite: the opaque and manipulative spectacles of ruling elites. Guy Debord's *Society of Spectacle* is such an example. As we saw earlier, Lefebvre clearly saw the power of the festive energy. "Lefebvre makes much of the festival, as opposed to the spectacle, as the site of participation and of the possibility of the poetry of creating new situations from desire [*jouissance*]" (Gregory 1994: 405).

From an anthropological perspective, May 68 was a period set apart from everyday life. Victor Turner describes such periods as "liminal," a concept he developed in his work on ritual, play and performance. The term is derived from *limen*, the Latin word for a border or threshold. Turner describes the liminal state:

> During the liminal period, the characteristics of the liminar (the ritual subjects in this phase) are ambiguous, for they pass through a cultural realm that has few or none of the attributes of the past or coming state. Liminars are stripped of status and authority, removed from a social structure maintained and sanctioned by power and force, and leveled to a homogeneous social state through discipline and ordeal. Their secular powerlessness may be compensated for by a sacred power, however—the power of the weak, derived on the one hand from the resurgence of nature when structural power is removed, and on the other from reception of sacred knowledge.
>
> (Turner 1979: 149)

Thus, the participants of May 68 were in a liminal state both by circumventing established structures in their conviction for change, and by their powerlessness against police violence. But equally significant, daily life was interrupted during the spring of 1968, as if time itself had stopped. General strikes made everyday routines impossible, and during this pause a process of reflection began:

> Everything stopped and free time became full time. Not since 1936 had we witnessed such a flourishing of all sorts of initiatives. Each day new newspapers appeared (Action, L'enragé, Le Pavé . . .); along with magazines (Le cinema s'insurge); graffiti ("Under the cobblestones the beach," "Take pleasure without barriers," "Run comrade, the old world is behind you"); wild spectacles (Pacra, festivals in the Marais, theaters of the Amandiers and of l'Epée de Bois)—all this as well as large public discussions in the Sorbonne amphitheater and in the Odeon theater.
>
> (Gasquet 1978: 7)

Michel de Certeau recalls the liminal sense of freedom and spontaneity that took over the streets:

> Something happened to us. Something began to move inside us. Emerging from somewhere, no one knows where, it suddenly filled the streets and the factories, circulated between us, became our own. The muffled noise of our loneliness, voices never heard before changed us. At least we had this feeling. This amazing thing happened: we began to talk. For the first time it seemed. From everywhere, emerged treasures, asleep or silent, experiences never expressed.
>
> (De Certeau 1994: 7)

To be sure, de Certeau, Lefebvre and other French intellectuals marked by their experience of May 68, saw in celebration the transformative potential for resistance and revolt. But much of the liminal, utopic memories of May 68 have, in the background, Rousseau's description of a spontaneous celebration where participants share a great sense of transparency. To recall, Louis Malle's "I fell into a gigantic wonderful festival"; de Certeau's, "this amazing thing happened: we began to talk. For the first time it seemed"; and later on we will see how students recall the occupation of the Sorbonne, as days when they were "energized by a breath of passion and some craziness too: an enormous ant farm where people moved around, talked, and especially discussed" (Dansette 1971: 147); an art student recalls how their posters depicted participants of the revolt as faces, eyes and hands in the posters, and adds "these speak of common understanding, friendship and fraternity"(Gasquest 1978); and Lefebvre finds the power of celebration in an event of the Commune, that most reassembles the festival described by Rousseau.

Keeping this in mind, let us now turn our attention to the events of May 68 and carefully extract their major festive components, or tropes. These include the architecture of the barricades, mapping the routes of the demonstrations in the city, the symbolic investment in monuments, graphic communication such as posters, banners and graffiti, and lastly the performative aspect of public speeches.

The architecture of the barricades

In May 1968, for the first time in almost a century, barricades were thrown up in the heart of Paris. The last time barricades blocked the city's streets was during the Commune of 1871. Parisians associated barricades with another time (the Paris Commune) or another place (such as the Battle of Algiers), and "their reappearance in a regime where the opposition can oppose and replace the government through elections was a dramatic indication of a profound crisis within French society, and was so understood by those in power" (Brown 1974: 2). When the rioters of May 68 shouted "*Vive la Commune!*" the reference was clear.

The initial spark of May 68 came from conflicts between students and administrators at the new campus of Nanterre on the outskirts of the city, but subsequent meetings and calls to action were centered in the symbolic Latin Quarter and the Sorbonne in the heart of the city. On May 6, tens of thousands of students demonstrated to put pressure on the University Council to reopen the Sorbonne, which had been closed and occupied by the police since the 3rd. Hundreds were injured and more than 600 demonstrators placed under arrest. The result was a whole series of demonstrations—ten in May and June of that year. Three of these came to be called the "nights of the barricades" (Figure 11.4).

The first one was the evening of May 10. On that day, 20,000 people paraded in Paris. The police had barred the roads leading to the Santé prison, where hundred of students were being held. Since the Sorbonne was still locked down by the police, the militants decided to assemble in the Latin Quarter to rally their forces. By midnight, newly erected barricades were manned by 15,000 to 20,000 determined people, half of whom were university students and the remainder high school students, *blousons noirs* and workers of all ages (Viénet 1968: 59). Sixty barricades, twenty of which were built very solidly, allowed demonstrators to defend their territory for quite a long time. One participant

Figure 11.4 Aerial police photograph of barricades on rue Gay-Lussac, Paris, May 1968. © Roger-Viollet.

recalls that architecture students were called upon to design the barricades so that they would be high, strong and impressive. First, the street to be barricaded should be the right size. If it was too wide, it would be too much work, and if it was too narrow, there wouldn't be enough support from the militants. Second, there should be a proper layering of material: cars and buses set on their side at the bottom, flat tree grilles to gain height, lots of cobblestones to fill in the gaps, and a few street signs on posts for verticality, along with the flags planted in the mass (Bonnemaison 2006).

According to René Viénet, poor strategic organization led the militants to gradually retreat into a restricted perimeter instead of branching out, and this created a trap. At two in the morning, police forces encircling the Latin Quarter launched attacks from all sides. The militants resisted for over three hours. The first barricade fell; the second, on rue Royer-Collard, resisted a long time; rioters threw cobblestones from windows and set fire to barricades they had sprinkled with fuel. The fight continued on rue d'Hulm and rue Gay-Lussac, where wires had been positioned 30 cm above the ground in front of the barricade. "Ernest Mandel, a Trotskyist leader from Belgium, stood on top of a barricade to view the spectacle of flames and shouted 'Ah the beauty of the revolution!'" (Viénet 1968: 60). The militants were armed with cobblestones and Molotov cocktails, while the police and CRS (Compagnies Republicaines de Securité) forces used hundreds of flame grenades, offensive grenades and chlorine gas as a way to "prepare" their attack on a barricade. The public was appalled by the police practice of beating the demonstrators. That night almost 400 people were injured, 32 gravely, close to 500 were taken into custody, and 188 cars were destroyed (Figure 11.5).

Even as people saw their cars go up in flames, they expressed sympathy for the militants by throwing water down onto demonstrators along with handkerchiefs and wet tablecloths to protect them from the effects of the tear gas. Many gave militants refuge in their apartments, bandaging bleeding cuts and rinsing eyes with water. In areas where demonstrators and the police were not fighting, there was an atmosphere of celebration. People distributed food to those manning the barricades, a baker sold his bread and served drinks for free.

The significance of processional routes

If we step back to look at the routes taken by the demonstrations in the city, we can see that not surprisingly, the majority began at the universities. The Faculté des Sciences was the head of the demonstrations on May 6 and 8, the Sorbonne campus was the head of those on May 10 and 16, the Ecole des Beaux Arts on May 6 and June 11. These demonstrations spread throughout Paris reaching far beyond the Latin Quarter, touching strategic sites such as the Place de la Bastille (and its reference to 1789 insurrection) and Place de la Nation (associated with the revolution of 1848). This was the case with the joint trade union and student demonstration of May 13, which I now describe in greater detail.

In protest against police brutality, the trade unions and teachers' federations called for a one-day general strike and mass demonstrations throughout France for Monday, May 13. The General Confederation of Workers (CGT) was the first to call a general strike, followed by the public services unions of the RATP (public transport in Paris), SNCF (train service) and EDF (electricity). After

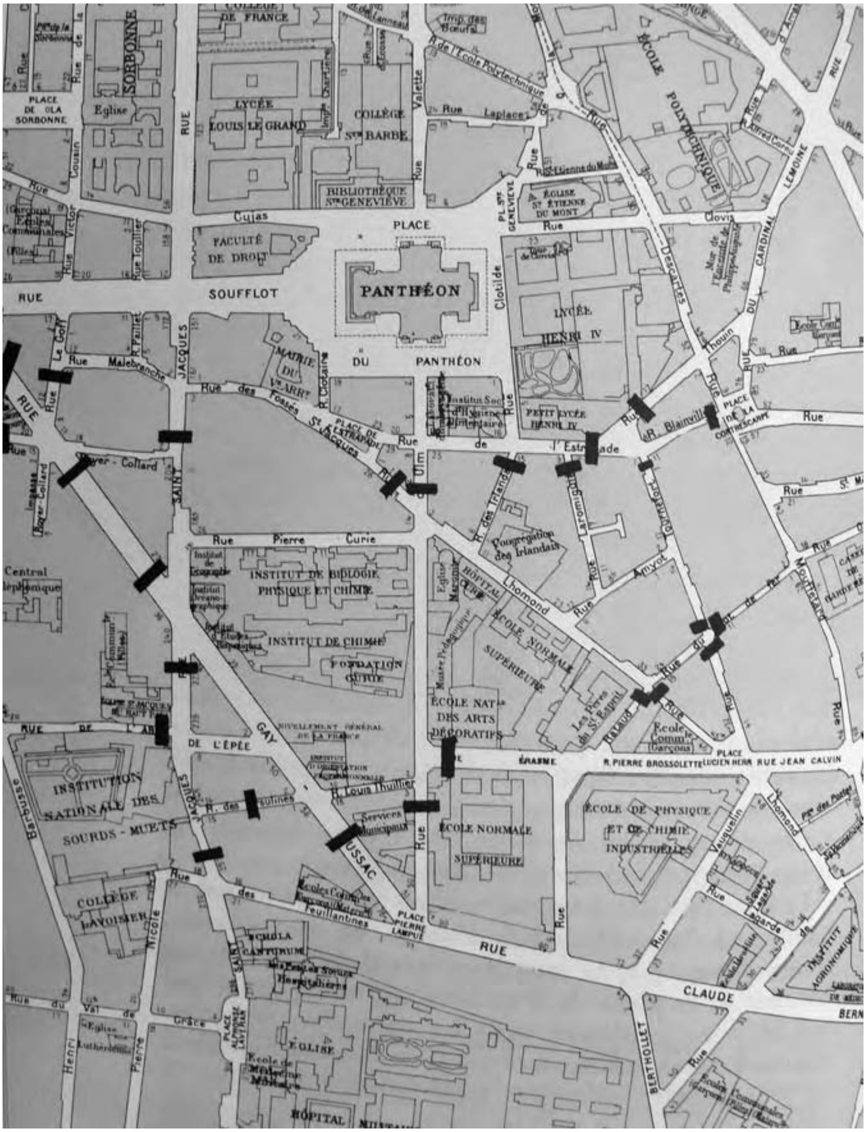

Figure 11.5 Map of defensive perimeter and major barricades in the occupied Latin Quarter, Paris, May 10, 1968. (From Vienet 1968: 58).

Figure 11.6 The joint worker-student demonstration on bridge St Michel, Paris, May 13, 1968. © Jacques Cuinières/Roger-Viollet.

much discussion between union and student organizations, it was agreed that the demonstration would go through the Latin Quarter (against the wishes of the CGT) and student leader Daniel Cohn-Bendit would be at its head (Figure 11.6).

In order to collect workers living in the northern regions of the city, participants first gathered on Place Verdun in front of the Gare de l'Est. The parade began its march from Place de la Republique, in the north of the city and the heart of working-class Paris. The route crossed the city to reach Denfert-Rochereau in the south. The political parties were not represented as such: only representive members were invited. Later, delegations from high schools and universities came down the Boulevard Magenta and 25,000 students joined the parade of the unionized workers marching on avenue de la Republique near rue Jean-Pierre Timbaud. The atmosphere was jubilant, with red flags floating high above the crowd and an enormous banner at the head of the parade that clearly spelled out their intention: "students, teachers, workers, solidarity." At the head of the parade were the principal student leaders Geismar, Sauvageot and Cohn-Bendit, as promised, and behind, deep in the parade, were heads of political parties such as Georges Marchais of the Communist Party and Guy Mollet, François Mitterand and Pierre Mendès France, associated with various wings of the Socialist Party. Later, Cohn-Bendit commented, "what made me happy today was to be at the head of a parade with those Stalinist carcasses in tow" (Dansette 1971: 136).

That day, the police stayed out of sight and the demonstration proceeded calmly down boulevard de Strasbourg to Denfert-Rochereau. The number of participants was so large that when it reached its terminus there were still people at the start that had not begun to march. All together, hundreds of thousands of people marched through Paris, including 25,000 students. At Denfert-Rochereau, union leaders ordered their members to disperse and Cohn-Bendit called for a sit-in at the Champs de Mars. Thousands of students reached the Seine but since all the bridges were blocked by police vans, they maneuvered along the river to the Champ de Mars to listen to Cohn-Bendit and Jacques Sauvageot (Dansette 1971: 137).

As the choice of sites visited by the demonstration reveals, the landscape of Paris was understood to be loaded with meaning. In this event, it was crucial that the demonstration be routed through certain sites in the city to inscribe the joining of workers and students. The Place de la Republique, where the parade began, is in the heart of the working-class neighborhood; it proceeded through the Latin Quarter as the symbolic heart of the universities and the site of the "night of the barricades" three days earlier; and it ended in Place Denfert-Rochereau, one of the gates of Paris, for an easier dispersal of the crowd. The Champ de Mars, site chosen for the discussion after the demonstration, carries the happy memory of the Fête de la Fédération— the first commemorative festival of the French Revolution in 1790 (Bonnemaison 2004).

Monuments and symbols

At a symbolic level, the old Sorbonne was far more meaningful than the new campus of Nanterre where the student revolt began, simply because of its geographical location and its history. The Sorbonne inherits seven centuries of history, it had been renovated under the Third Republic, and was world-renowned as a symbol of French knowledge. After the demonstration of May 13, a number of students gravitated toward the Sorbonne now that it was no longer barred by the police. They entered and occupied the building. "Those who could crowd into the grand amphitheater became the all-powerful sovereign assembly and declared the University of Paris an autonomous people's university. There began the unforgettable spectacle of a French-style cultural revolution" (Brown 1974: 12). On top of its main entrance a red flag was floating in the wind and a poster on the wall read: "This university is open to everyone, students, workers." In the courtyard, an impromptu jazz concert took advantage of a stray piano; statues of Victor Hugo and Louis Pasteur were draped with red flags and black bunting; long tables were covered with piles of tracts and books for anyone to read, as well as photographs of Marx, Lenin, Trotsky, Fidel Castro and Che Guevara. Many people commented on the festival atmosphere. The spectacle in the Sorbonne:

> took the form of a fair or a Bastille Day celebration, energized by a breath of passion and some craziness too: an enormous ant farm where people moved around, talked, and especially discussed, discussed everything, discussed endlessly, the students intermingled with curious onlookers and workers sent by their unions, these and those observing this frantic energy without rule and without measure.
>
> (Dansette 1971: 147)

A similar occupation was carried out by the Odeon Revolutionary Action Committee and the group Culture and Creativity. After a dance performance on the evening of 15 May, these two artists' groups commandeered the Odeon theater and occupied it, as a critique on the commercialization of art (Figure 11.7). After an all-night discussion between the occupying groups, the theater's director and the company of actors, a poster was pinned on the entrance door

Figure 11.7 Occupation of the Odeon Theater, May 15, 1968. © Roger-Viollet.

that read, “Imagination reclaims the carcass of the French theater—free entry” with red and black flags on either side of the building (Dansette 1971: 154). For the students of May 68, to occupy the Odeon was to take over a state institution—but here again, there was an important historical reference. The same building had been occupied before, during the Revolution of 1789 when, in a desire to bring transparency to darkness of theatrical spectacle, a light fabric roof had been strung from the building’s façade over a public square, with a stage below for public performance.

The performative aspects of the revolution

The strategists of the student revolution found a way to confront police and governmental repression through humor, a festive spirit and a desire to express pleasure. It is no accident that one of the most reproduced images was of student leader Daniel Cohn-Bendit smiling directly at a helmeted and uniformed riot policeman.

Theater reviewer Guy Dumur reflects on the powerful interplay between contemporary theater and the drama imbedded in the demonstrations:

> Modern theater is the only kind of theater that excites passion in our young generation, who in May 68 transformed the streets of Paris into a huge theater, where the police force—dressed in black and moving up Boulevard Saint Michel through the smoke of tear gas—played their role in a staged drama from the extreme avant-garde. But life, we all know, copies art, and May 68 would not have been what it was if we were not in the era of “happenings,” of the Living Theater and all the exploded forms of theater that no longer allowed themselves to be confined by the gilded balconies of the playhouse.
>
> (Dumur 1971: 44)

To conceive of demonstrations as festivals or, as Dumur does, as avant-garde performances, one must keep in mind that most of the participants in May 68 were familiar with historical accounts of nineteenth-century revolutions (such as the ones of 1830, 1848 and the Commune of 1871), as well as earlier commemorations of the 1789 revolution with their well-known floats designed by Jacques-Louis David. For example, a student said, “*on a pris la parole comme on avait pris la Bastille*” (we seized control of the word like we seized the Bastille) (Dansette 1971: 149). Such awareness of historical precedents shows the importance of past revolutions in May 68’s re-investment of the street. In other words, the organizers of the demonstrations and the behavior of the “performers” in and around the barricades both consciously (and sometimes unconsciously) referred to revolutionary events. Paintings also influenced the way students posed on top of their barricades, holding up red or black flags, modeling themselves after Delacroix’s famous allegory, *Liberty leading the People* during the revolution of 1830. And there is a lot to pick from since, as

Walter Benjamin remarked, Paris is a landscape of volcanoes that erupts with each revolution.

The performative aspects of the militants included their dress, flags, banners and slogans. In general, we can say that red flags were held by supporters of Trotskyist and Maoist groups, while black flags represented the anarchists and surrealists—regrouped under M22M (named after Fidel Castro's March 22 Movement)—who refused to draw up a program or create structures. Their figurehead, Cohn-Bendit, was a strong orator—one of the important performative qualities of the revolt. People were astounded by the political sophistication of this 23-year-old sociology student and by his presentation of a political theory that was coherent, comprehensive and new. Asserting "no hierarchy, nor any other form of constraint should be imposed upon free men and women," Cohn-Bendit revived anarchist thinking and denounced all existing political systems. According to Brown, "he dammed with equal vigor the bourgeois state and the Communist Party or any other party professing to speak on the behalf of the workers" (Brown 1974: 82). In Cohn-Bendit's words:

> What we propose is very difficult to understand. People imagine that, somewhere, someone decides for them, leads them toward a goal, and they believe that a central structure of authority must exist. We want to prove to them that they are wrong. Order, such as we know it, can disappear. The way schools and universities are taken over proves it. The movement creates itself as it moves forward.
>
> (cited in Brown 1974: 82)

For Cohn-Bendit, "workers must take over the means of production, not only occupying premises but above all assuming managerial functions . . . through 'action committees'. The final goal is the unimpeded liberty of the individual" (Brown 1974: 82). In the spirit of the anarchist festival, Cohn-Bendit and his friends through M22M set about joyously to create trouble, stir up students and insult opponents—all to prove that emperors at every level of the system were without clothes.

Posters and graffiti

New posters appeared every morning in occupied universities, schools and factories, and on walls of nearby buildings. Posters were constantly transforming the urban landscape of Paris. Students of the Ecole des Beaux Arts designed and printed hundreds of different posters to be put up at night. Early on, they determined that lithography was too cumbersome and slow and instead used silkscreening, an easy technology that enabled students to produce up to 250 prints an hour. For art students, posters were more effective weapons than cobblestones (Figure 11.8).

Through posters, they could use art to effect change and not just represent it. The accumulation of these posters, and written comments added to and

Figure 11.8
On ne matraque pas l'imagination (Don't clobber imagination). Poster, Paris, May 1968. © Roger-Viollet.

around them, resembled the "talking walls" initiated by the Chinese Cultural Revolution and this connection was often made evident in their design. One of the participants saw two major themes emerge from these posters: the riot police, known by their acronym CRS, and the crowd:

> The CRS had the power of repression. These posters, dark and compact, reveal that the dismantling of the existing power structure must revert to the shield for protection and the club to strike. The image of the CRS is blind—it has no eyes (they are hidden by the protective glasses), nor a face (which is hidden by the plastic hood). The CRS is an instrument. The crowds are treated in different ways. Sometimes anonymous, they are represented as points or spots: this is the people. Sometimes faces, eyes and hands are shown: these speak of common understanding, friendship and fraternity.
>
> (Gasquet 1978: 17)

One art student recalls May 68 as a time when art made life more interesting than art:

> Artists are no longer in their studios, they no longer work, they can't work any more because the real is more powerful than their inventions. Naturally they become militants, me among them. We created the People's Fine Arts Workshop and we made posters
>
> (Ross 2002: 16)

During the spring of 1968, Paris everywhere showed the marks of intense textuality. Slogans and chants were considered expressions of mass spontaneity and individual ingenuity. Although according to Brown, "only afterward was it evident that these slogans were fragments of a coherent and seductive ideology and had virtually all previously appeared in Situationist tracts and publications" (Brown 1974: 87). This connection was most clear with graffiti. Painted in vivid color on the walls of certain buildings, these texts acted out what Roland Barthes had previously theoretically explored as "reading the landscape as text" (Barthes 1981).

Visitors to the Sorbonne and other university buildings were struck by the graffiti emblazoned on the walls. It was as if the Chinese Cultural Revolution had suddenly erupted in the middle of Paris. Many slogans resonated with a range of cultural and political references that combined anarchist demands with surrealism, such as "I take my desires for reality because I believe in the reality of my desires." There was condemnation of modern society, "The forest precedes man, the desert follows him"; repudiation of the consumer economy and society of spectacle: "merchandise—burn it," "Banish applause, spectacle is everywhere," and "Are you consumers or real participants?"; vigorous protest against the degradation of life under capitalism: "Look at your work, it's futile torture"; "People who work are bored when they don't work. People who don't work are never bored" and, quoting directly from the Situationists, "Never work."

Many graffiti expressed a desire to create change outside of established political parties, such as "Down with Stalinist cadavers" at the rue d'Ulm university campus, "Down with Socialist Realism, Hurray for surrealism" at the Lycée Condorcet. At the Sorbonne: "Down with the parliamentary objectivity of committees," "Intelligence is on the side of the bourgeoisie. Creativity is on the side of the masses," "Stop voting," and "Action allows us to conquer divisions and to find solutions." Marxism was a strong reference in other graffiti at the Sorbonne, such as "Abolish alienation," "Young Marxist Pessimists," "Hurray for the International Workers Association," "Abolish class society." From the anarchist and surrealist tendencies we find: "Action should not be a reaction but creation" and "Love one another on top of one another" from the Censier university campus, and "The golden age was when gold didn't rule" from the foyer of the Odéon theater. Other memorable inventions were "Alcohol kills, take LSD," "I came in the cobblestones," and "The more I make love, the more I feel like making the revolution; the more I make the revolution, the more I feel like making love" (Figure 11.9).

Sometimes, the walls offered pedestrians the best current analysis of the political situation—for example, of de Gaulle's uninspired radio address of May

Figure 11.9 *Sous les pavés, la plage* (Beneath the cobblestones, the beach). Street graffiti, Paris, May 1968. © Roger-Viollet.

24 that showed the extent to which he was out of touch with the situation. His solution to the crisis was yet another referendum meant to assure "all elements of the population a right to participate in decisions affecting them," accompanied by his customary threat of resignation. The speech fell flat, and a graffiti on the wall of the Grand Palais explained why, "He took three weeks to announce in five minutes that he was going to undertake in one month what he had not succeeded in doing in ten years."[1]

Part two—The intermediate phase

Between May 25 and 27, an agreement called the Grenelle Accord was negotiated between management and unions. This agreement ended the general strike. The immediate result of the settlement was a small increase in the minimum wage and an extension of union rights in the factories. This was a small gain for the workers in relation to the amplitude of the movement. On May 29, de Gaulle reverted to the strategy of previous French rulers—going abroad to call in troops. Traveling to Baden-Baden, he secured the promise of General Jacques Massu, commander of 70,000 French forces stationed in Germany, to come to his rescue to "bring order back to France." On de Gaulle's return, over 300,000 of his supporters demonstrated in favor of the regime on the Champs Elysées, chanting slogans like "*France aux Français, les ouvriers au boulot*" (France for the French, workers back to their jobs) and "*Cohn-Bendit à Dachau.*" Encouraged by the show of support and with a commitment from the troops stationed in Germany, de Gaulle announced on the radio that he will not resign. "Power chased away imagination. The festival was over" (Ross 2002: 66). The pro-order people wanted normal life to resume—to buy gas for their car, take the train and metro, and have the mountains of garbage collected. In the end, de Gaulle resigned a year later, after the rejection of his proposal for Senate reorganization to increase the power of the president.

Life, it seemed, went back to normal. Under de Gaulle's dictum that "nothing more must happen either on the streets or in public buildings," it was clear that something *was* happening. As a result, the control of the street and the repression that came with it was constantly under the surface. Indeed the invasion of the street by plainclothes policemen began in 1968 and increased in the years that followed. "They were everywhere, in any place they deem suspicious, near movie houses, in cafés, even in museums, approaching whenever three or four people are together talking innocently" (Ross 2002: 117). Under the new Pompidou government a high school teacher could be suspended or even fired for distributing tracts to the students, being pregnant and unmarried, studying texts about homosexuality in class, hanging an anti-imperialist poster in the corridor (Ross 2002: 117). During the Avignon theater festival, a newspaper reported that one of the actors of the Living Theater "was arrested and condemned to several months in prison (as a deferred sentence) because he took a few steps in the street dressed in a bathing suit. Those who have seen the beautiful spectacles of the Living Theatre must protest against such close minds and violence aimed at the new artistic expression, which the provinces should get used to" (Dumur 1969: 48).

But resistance existed everywhere—among artists who pushed boundaries and conquered the street, and students who discussed repression in seminars with professors such as Lefebvre. Michel Foucault researched the history of discipline and punishment, lecturing publicly to large crowds at the College de France and publishing his findings as *Discipline and Punish* in 1975. In the spring of 1968, the rules as to what should happen on the street were radically, and at times violently, redefined. Before then, most people thought of the street as a place for circulation, not for creative engagement. And although the political battle was over, the events of May had opened a door that would not be easily closed again. People realized that something fundamental had changed with regard to the use of the street and public spaces. Through panels and photographs, a Dutch exhibition dedicated to the social aspects of the street described that change. One of the panels read:

> In the 1960s the street is an active site for political and cultural actions—sit-ins, happenings, provocations, demonstrations—which brought back the social function of the street as a place to meet or to celebrate. But these also provoked a severe repression everywhere.
>
> (Chronique 1972: 13)

The marginal space of Les Halles

A good example of Lefebvre's *spatial imagination* was the transformation of Les Halles market in the centre of Paris. Site of the city's oldest market, it was originally located near the Seine River to accommodate the barges that brought produce into Paris. Emile Zola called it "the belly of the city," since the food first concentrated there, and then dispersed towards everyone's dinner table. In 1854, the tents and umbrellas were replaced by twelve iron and glass pavilions designed by Victor Baltard that were connected by covered streets. These were the result of Haussmann's terse instructions, "Iron, iron, nothing but iron" (Evenson 1973: 308).

Over time, as waterborne commerce was replaced by rails and roads and barges by trains and trucks, traffic in the area of Les Halles became increasingly congested. In the eyes of the government, the market district was "a deteriorating hub for prostitution and tuberculosis, an eyesore since the 1930s" (Fierro 2003: 71). Predictably, it was Les Halles' urban characteristics that endeared the market to the Situationists, who devoted several of their "psychogeographic" maps to documenting the area, "correctly identifying a gap in the Parsian spectacle" (Fierro 2003: 71). The result was a decision to relocate the central market to Rungis, near Orly airport, which was done in 1969. Yet "as early as 1963, with the first proposals to relocate the market, protest groups began forming, and continued actively to resist the proposed renovations. Their concern focused on the alteration of the social and physical character of the Halles district"—which, like the Latin Quarter, was a section of the city that had changed little since the Middle Ages (Evenson 1973: 309). After 1969, when the pavilions were empty, art groups adopted this exceptional place until 1971, when—in spite of heated protests—Baltard's pavilions were demolished that August, while many activists were away on vacation. The site stayed vacant for years until it was re-opened in 1979 as "Le Forum des Halles," an underground shopping mall designed by Paul Chemetov. The project was a great disappointment. Beneath the tiers of the giant shopping mall lies the city's largest transport hub connecting to the new towns on the city's periphery. Le Forum des Halles quickly became a meeting place of choice for teenagers, and that in turn attracted large numbers of drug dealers. Emile Zola's "belly of Paris" had become the "veins of Paris" and in 2003, mayor Bertrand Delanoe launched a renovation of the whole of Les Halles district.

The period of 1969–71 is what retains our attention here, as a transitional period between the liminal (spontaneous) and liminoid (structured) phases of culture in the streets, following May 68. At that time, a wide range of arts and performing groups experimented within the open, flexible spaces of the Les Halles pavilions. "The spaces in the cellars and above ground were leased for a variety of uses, and the market buildings became the site for theaters, cinemas, art exhibits, circuses, rock concerts, even an amusement park" (Evenson 1973: 312). Les Halles was a marginal urban space in more ways than one. First, its existence as a cultural Mecca was an interval between two programs established for the site—as a market and as a shopping mall. During this interval anything could happen, since the place was slated for demolition. Second, the simplicity of the iron and glass sheds attracted avant-garde artists who were repudiating theaters and art galleries in favor of new alternative venues. Les Halles stimulated their spatial imagination in a way that proved to be deeply influential, in the reinterpretation of this architecture and in the type of art that was shown. According to Lefebvre, there is a lot to learn about spatial imagination from these types of experiences:

> Appropriation should not be confused with a practice which is closely related to it but still distinct, namely "diversion" [*détournement*]. A space may outlive its original purpose and the raison d'être which determines its forms, functions and structures; it may thus in a sense become vacant, and susceptible to being diverted, re-appropriated and put to uses quite different from its initial ones. A recent instance of this was the re-appropriation of Les Halles markets in 1969–71. For a brief period this urban centre, designed to facilitate the distribution of food, was transformed into a gathering-place and a scene of permanent festival—in short, into a centre of play rather than of work—for the youth of Paris. The diversion and re-appropriation of such spaces are of great significance, for they teach us much about the production of new spaces.
>
> (Lefebvre, 1974: 167)

Of the many activities that took place in the Baltard pavilions, one theater performance stands out as particularly meaningful with respect to Lefebvre's "production of new spaces." This was a performance of *Orlando Furioso*, a play based on a poem by Lodovico Ariosto and directed by Luca Ronconi. The way the space and the performance fused into one made this event memorable. The theater critic Guy Dumur commented on its extraordinary effect on spectators:

> the few thousands of privileged people who (well-informed) witnessed one of the performances of *Orlando Furioso* and liked what they saw, can be recognized in the anonymous crowds of Paris. Their faces are clearer, more confident, more open—simply more human.
>
> (Dumur 1970: 47)

The raw iron and glass pavilions was the right venue for that kind of new theater. Wanting to reconnect with medieval forms of theater, Ronconi conceived of the performing arena as an open public space with the audience standing, and having to move to see the scenes unfold on floats. The floats were propelled by actors and passed right through the performing area with a sense of urgency. "Their continuous movement—endangering the spectators and forcing them to move away suddenly—is a means of attack and a means of communication" (Quadri 1970: 119). Dumur's description of the performance communicates the excitement of this new dramatic space:

> In the distance, we see horses and spears, swords flying over heads. Up close we are pushed around, compressed by furious giants and amazons, like the large saints in processions of Saint Firmin. The spectators are constantly on the move, creating a large wave as a chariot suddenly slices through the crowd, and the screams of spectators mingle with the shouts of actors. Each scene provokes new emotions. In one instant, glass cubes create an enchanted palace. In another, a hippogriff passes above our heads, like the flying machine of Leonardo da Vinci. A thousand "attractions" are exquisitely choreographed beneath the apparent chaos of willfully dispersed activities, until the final labyrinth made of gauze cages in which the audience finds themselves imprisoned, amongst orgiastic scenes from a Breughel painting, separated from the actors only by wire netting. [. . .] What an evening! This kind of expression bursts open all our mental habits, our memories, and at the same time reconciles the past with the present, violence and dream, high and low culture. It is a miracle. [Figure 11.10]
> (Dumur 1970: 47)

In an effort to describe what was unique about this theater production, the Italian theater critic Franco Quadri linked it to his experience of festivals:

> A spirit of initiative, like in popular festivals, often tempts spectators to help actors push the floats and make themselves something of co-actors, or more of participants in the spectacle. This participation obviously derives from a removal of prohibitions and a return to a state of infantile immediacy in the face of the fantastic and the marvelous that the spectacle evokes
> (Quadri 1970: 124)

Ronconi was working within a new genre that Richard Schechner, and others in the New York experimental theatre scene, called "environmental theatre." In 1968, he published the "Six Axioms for Environmental Theater" in *The Drama Review*. According to Schechner, environmental theater aims to create "an event that is a complex of social interweave, a network of expectations and obligations" (Schechner 1968: 42). The theatrical complexity is generated by overlapping, interacting and juxtaposed activities, unlike traditional theatre that relies on a linear narrative which leads the audience from one scene to the next.

Figure 11.10 Performance of Orlando Furioso, directed by Luca Ronconi. (From Quadri 1970: 122).

In addition, "the focus is flexible and variable" (Schechner 1968: 56). This means that unlike traditional theater, where spotlights direct the audience's attention, in environmental theatre, audience members may focus their attention on one actor or another, and their focus changes constantly. In terms of environmental theatre's spatial qualities, Schechner says, "all the space is used for performance, [and] all the space is used for audience" (Schechner 1968: 48). This may be the single most important contribution of environmental theater. Since ancient Greece, Western theatrical convention has reserved a sacred place for the performance. But in many traditional and/or non-literate cultures, according to Schechner, festivals allow us to experience a total mixture of performers and audience in one space. Environmental theater like *Orlando Furioso* can transform all of a space into a stage. Other theatre groups—such as Julian Beck and Judith Malina's Living Theatre, Jerzi Grotowski's Laboratory Theatre, Peter Schumann's Bread and Puppet Theatre and Arianne Mnouchkine's Theatre du Soleil—also worked in this genre to develop their own aesthetic.

Environmental theater, installation art, happenings and other avant-garde artistic expressions found a home in Les Halles market buildings to great effect. All these pursued the celebration impulse, although some in a more choreographed and structured manner. In addition, these activities contributed to keeping the neighborhood alive.

> Although many businesses which had been dependent on the market began to close, other enterprises moved in, but of a very different sort. The muscular proletarian aura of Les Halles began to be transformed by an influx of antique dealers, interior decorators, discotheques, fashionable boutiques, espresso bars, and shops selling art books and avant-garde jewelry.
>
> (Evenson 1973: 312)

The debate around the destruction of the pavilions did not openly take into account what was happening there. The design magazine *Créer* reports one aspect of this omission:

> The transformation of the pavilions at Les Halles proved that they could welcome a great number of activities and fulfill a role for animation and gathering in the centre of the capital. Yet, this realization did not influence the decision towards their preservation! Instead, the government framed the debate in terms of the buildings' appearance—that is, their value as architectural heritage. By choosing this tactic, they excluded the social dimension from the debate. In fact beyond this false cultural dilemma, so masterfully orchestrated, the destruction of the pavilions of Les Halles was only one chapter in the conquest (and certain death) of the city centre by those in power, under different and complementary forms: centrality of politics and finance (the future "city" in Paris), of culture (the future Beaubourg), and of decision and control (the city of offices and elites). The [inevitable] counterpart to this centrality is a concommitant decentralization towards the periphery to create zones of habitation and zones of production. To dismantle and transport one of the pavilions of Les Halles to a new town in the suburbs of Paris is a decision that doesn't lack in humor, if not cynicism.
>
> (*Créer* 1974: 74)

From the government's point of view, the district of Les Halles needed "cleaning up." The decision to demolish the former markets was a political one, part of a larger intent to repress the *liminal* qualities of that site and replace it with a cultural center funded by the government and administered by appointed officials. In addition, the new president Georges Pompidou wanted to leave his imprint on the Parisian landscape and a renovation project was not monumental enough to accomplish this goal.

Part three—the *liminoid* phase

To me, the festive atmosphere in the former markets of Les Halles represents a transition between the liminal period of May 68 and a more structured version that followed. Victor Turner would call this phase liminoid—an ordered, permanent and centrally supervised version of the former festive events. Among the various new spaces dedicated to contemporary arts that opened in the 1970s, I see in the Center Georges Pompidou many liminoid qualities of the celebratory impulse. Also known as Beaubourg for its location on the Plateau Beaubourg, the Center opened its doors in early 1977 just east of the former Les Halles. The massive building was designed by Renzo Piano and Richard Rogers to house four distinct activities: a much needed public library, a music research center, a museum for a permanent collection of modern art as well as temporary exhibits, and a center for industrial design.

A formative influence on the architects Piano and Rogers was Cedric Price's unrealized *Fun Palace* of 1962 conceived with Joan Littlewood of the Theatre Workshop in East London as a "laboratory of fun" with facilities for many kinds of arts. Price, like Buckminster Fuller, believed that new technology offered people an unprecedented degree of control over their environment, so buildings could be responsive to people's needs and support the many activities intended to take place there (Design Museum 2006). The designers of the Fun Palace declared it to be "one large volume for assembly, exhibition. Inflatable structure totally or partially enclosed, opaque or translucent create free-areas or containing sub-enclosures" (Price and Littlewood 1968: 131). Their project aimed to bring different experiences together in one large volume rather than keeping them separated by function or activity, as was standard architectural and planning practice at the time.

The Fun Palace encouraged multiple interactions, "a large semi-enclosed space with a series of decks hung at multiple levels allows maximum interactions between people, projected images and sound in these fun palaces" (Price and Littlewood 1968: 131). Visitors to the Fun Palace would interact not only with each other, but with performing artists and projected images. The architectural parallel to such theatrical interaction would be provided by "space frames . . . capable of adjustment and reassembly. Varied enclosures form rooms, galleries, shelters, walkways, balconies. Infill panels arranged as required" (Price and Littlewood 1968: 131). Flexibility is one offspring of modern architecture, and "total theater" one of the main theatrical references, but in their project, Price and Littlewood proposed to break down the large flexible performing space into smaller rooms and enclosures. Like the rapidly changing scenes of environmental theater, the flexible enclosures that result would be individually responsive to changes in programming. Finally, Price and Littlewood openly acknowledge their debt to experimental theater as they end their essay by saying:

> many who start by wandering half-attentively, or even skeptically, through the complex will be drawn into these and other elementary exercises in social observation. In what has been called the acting area, for instance, there will be no rigid division between performers and audience—a generalization of the technique used in Theater Workshop for many years.
> (Price and Littlewood 1968: 131)

Through this comparison, we can see that the Piano and Rogers' project for Beaubourg shares with the Fun Palace a belief in human transactions and interaction, flexible spaces, multiple focus, diversity and degrees of enclosures, an emphasis on transparency, multiple levels, moving elements, and most of all, the belief that visitors should share one fluid space.

The liminoid qualities of Beaubourg

The winning architectural scheme by Piano and Rogers showed the activities of adjacent city streets continuing across a permeable and transparent enclosure into the ground floor of their building. A large portion of the site was allocated to create a public plaza for temporary events and gatherings. Both of these ideas were to evolve into liminoid versions of their original intentions. If we were to look at the other schemes in the architectural competition, we would see that while most of the entries filled the entire site, the winning scheme of Piano and Rogers left half of it unbuilt for a large public square. On this unusual move, the architectural historian Nathan Silver comments:

> some members of the team realized that street theater was very strong in France, and the number of wandering groups was exceptional. But Paris had few squares of the Italian kind, and indeed less open ground than any comparable Western city.
> (Silver 1994: 25)

To help redress this imbalance, Piano and Rogers designed a large plaza animated by tensile structures, an outdoor movie projector aimed towards the building's western façade, additional small projectors located on the second and sixth floors on the inside, which would animate the façade with images, an open-air theater and abundant quantities of trees and bushes. It is clear that this space was meant for gatherings, events, and celebrations of all sorts (Plate 11). Effectively, the face of the building fronting the plaza was designed to function as a giant billboard:

> In addition to supergraphic décor, the grill would contain a moving electric sign shown to read "Animated movie production for the Computer Techniques" while a smaller section of the façade was to carry a message of social relevance: "Caroline. Go to Kansas City immediately. Your friend Linda has been busted."
> (Evenson 1973: 314)

Much like Garnier's Paris Opera or the large department stores of Samaritaine and the Bon Marché, Beaubourg's cross section shows how the building's plaza was conceived as a stage, with the open galleries and transparent escalators of the giant building serving as theater boxes, "on galleries and escalators, scores of people were shown, ostensibly looking down on the people at piazza level. Piazza crowds were ostensibly looking up" (Silver 1994: 33). The sense of event and celebration was not restricted to the public square. The final architectural drawings showed the ground floor as a completely permeable enclosure with eleven public entrances allowing street life to filter into the building with ease:

> There was meant to be no "main" entrance; people were intended to cross through the building if they wanted to, without stopping. The design team had hoped that neighborhood shoppers would take shortcuts through the ground floor and learn things en route. [. . .] But when the project was in its last design phase, fire codes demanded that the architects eliminate a great deal of the original transparency in the facades. As a result, the ground floor of the building lost its strong connection with the surrounding streets. A few years later, the north and south doors were blocked off to make room for more display space, thwarting the cross circulation plan. To enter the building, most people needed to crowd around one small entrance, which pushed a determined wedge of pedestrian circulation through the plaza.
> (Silver 1994: 179)

In their operation of Beaubourg, management had reversed the central concept of permeable building's enclosure, opting instead for a controlled highly linear flow of visitors through the building. The ground floor went from being a sort of strolling garden to being more like a train station, which led to a constant concern about people "loitering." From his interview of the staff, sociologist Jean Lauxerois concludes that:

> they detest cluttering, congestion, intestinal retention, constipation, stasis and dirt. Whether it be discussing the problem of homeless people surrounding the building or students lining up to enter the library, everything gets subsumed under a general necessity for flows and fluidity.
> (Lauxerois 1996: 26)

As for the plaza, budget cuts left no allocation for public space design, so it remained a simple square paved in cobblestones. Early on, when the police arrested a street performer on the plaza, a group of onlookers marched to the station and made a fuss, which led to his release. Following that incident, Beaubourg's administration allowed entertainers to work the crowds on the plaza. History books celebrate the festive qualities of this new square:

> Beaubourg's plaza had become public terrain, perpetually full of people, with events, participants, rings of crowds of viewers. The housings on the

> back plaza became ad hoc performing stages. The big vents became poster display surfaces. A circus was allowed to set up its tent.
>
> (Silver 1994: 179)

The plaza was officially a success, while offering proof of how few public spaces tolerated street performers in the city center at that time.

Set theory for programming

In lengthy consultations with members of Beaubourg's future administration, François Lombard elaborated a program. The overarching goal was the "communication of information." Divided into three subsets, information was intended for: the public at large, the specialist and the artist, with an increasing specialization as visitors moved upwards in the building from floor to floor. The building was zoned accordingly, with exhibitions for the general public on the ground floor and the most specialized on the top floor.

As founding director of the museum of modern art housed in Beaubourg, Swedish curator Pontus Hulten organized large-scale shows that examined the making of art's history through the links between artistic capitals. "Multivalent and interdisciplinary, [Hulten's] shows marked a paradigm shift in exhibition making, entering the collective memory of generations of artists, curators, and critics as few others have" (Obrist 1997: 17). Structuralism in general and set theory in particular had a great impact on the building's architecture (in the form of bubble diagrams) and on the idea of flexible programming for its spaces. In the early years of the Beaubourg's existence, set theory helped its administration to develop a system for multidisciplinary exhibitions and event programming. Curators could map out the unique characteristics of each discipline (e.g. painting, sculpture, dance), each public (specialists, artists, general public), and each media (poster, film, installations). But set theory also helped to bring the various sub-sets into thematic wholes. Hulten recalls how:

> the "Paris-New York" show brought together people from various departments, including the library. The intent was to make straightforward exhibitions but also to raise issues. The "Paris-Moscow" exhibition, for instance, reflected the beginnings of Glasnost before the West knew any such thing existed. All these shows included not only art objects ranging from Constructivist to Pop, but also films, posters, documentation, and reconstructions of exhibition spaces such as Gertrude Stein's salon.
>
> (Obrist 1997: 19)

Washing the culture clean

The combination of the building's high-tech style and its constantly renewed exhibitions created a giant cultural machine in the heart of Paris. But this machine, according to Lauxerois, relied on the modernist idea that good architecture should take an active role in healing society's physical and moral ills. Physically, the entire neighborhood surrounding Beaubourg went through major renovations in order to "clean out" the unhealthy living conditions of shanty housing. Morally, Lauxerois says, the Center promised to wash away the dirt from the cultural realm at a time when culture was seen by many as "savage" (Lauxerois 1996: 29).

It is surprising to read this when one thinks of the large and trusting public who have adopted Beaubourg as their own, relying on its succession of innovative exhibitions for their cultural education. One cannot help but wonder how Lauxerois can describe Beaubourg as a washing machine for "savage" contemporary culture. In many respects, this is yet another liminoid aspect of the Beaubourg—culture is presented creatively and innovatively but it has also, at the same time, been cleaned out, organized and explained. In such a view, environmental theater such as *Orlando Furioso* would never exist—it could not, in the confines of a modern, "experimental" black-box theater. Neither could happenings by artists such as Jean-Jacques Le Bel, who used chickens and blood in his performances, nor could the Bread and Puppet Theatre who, at the end of each performance, share bread with their audience as a ritual. These were the dirty, uncontrolled art practices that were taken up by the machine of Beaubourg, to be washed clean for presentation to the visiting public.

Yet many aspects of the Beaubourg suggest participation. It broke with standard museum practices of guarding exhibitions, instead hiring art historians and artists to answer questions and watch over the public. Artists were hired to hang the work and build reconstructions, such as Gertrude Stein's *Salon* or Tatlin's tower. Hulten invited painters and sculptors to create site-specific installations and break the rules of traditional exhibitions. The first one was called Crocrodome, a collective carnavalesque installation organized by Tinguely and Luginbuhl. Other artists contributed to the monster: Niki de Saint Phalle created a muse and Sporerri lodged his Sentimental Museum. Hulten remembers the Crocrodome as an installation "that stood out from the rest of contemporary art for being joyous, funny, and not pompous in any way" (Viatte 2007: 52).

But the divide between public and programmers always remained clear. Culture, in Beaubourg, never allows for spontaneous participation. De Certeau remarks that "the same logic links producers to consumers: on one side, it is about showing and on the other, it is about seeing. This is visual imperialism" (De Certeau 1987: 70). Through explanatory labels, catalogs, postcards and books written by art historians and curators, both the art and the artists were constantly being re-presented in a liminoid manner.

In many respects, Beaubourg stands as the terminal monument to Jean Jacques Rousseau's festival space—a space of complete transparency programmed for a constantly renewed celebration of the visible. If Rousseau wanted to do away with shadows and secrecy of royalty, De Certeau says that Beaubourg is missing secrets, shadows, spaces for quiet reflection. In fact, within the first twenty years, the need for opacity led the administrators to hire designer Gae Aulenti to renovate the building's interior to create spaces for retreat and concentration, using thick immovable partitions for hanging glass display cases. From liminoid to conventional, Beaubourg may have simply discovered the wisdom of the architecture of medieval convents and monasteries: a balance between large gathering spaces for celebration of culture and small reclusive spaces for reflection and work. To this day, its plaza remains a space for the curators and the administration to discover.

Notes

All translations by the author unless noted otherwise.

1 That night Paris suffered its third bloody Friday in that May. Gangs of rioters swept through the city and set fire to the Stock Exchange. The bitterest fighting took place in the Latin Quarter: over 500 people were injured and 600 taken into custody.

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